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THE
MOTHER'S
MANUAL.

Mrs REED











"Listen while I read, and try to picture the events to yourselves."
See page 130.

THE

MOTHER'S MANUAL

FOR THE

TRAINING

OF

HER CHILDREN;

CONSISTING OF

Hints derived from Personal Experience, and Conversations held at Maternal Meetings, for more than Thirty Years.

BY MRS. REED.

LONDON:

JARROLD & SONS, 12, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLXV.

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PREFACE.

THE Contents of this little Manual, so thoroughly explain and commend themselves to the large class of persons likely to be interested in them, that a formal introduction may seem unnecessary.

It cannot, however, appear unsuitable, that the members of a family, who were so deeply concerned in the principles here laid down, and the prayerful deliberations represented, should feel a pleasure in bearing their united testimony to the happy effects produced on themselves and many others by parental and Christian influence.

In the firm persuasion, derived from experience, that Fathers and Mothers, animated by the principles and spirit of the excellent Maternal Meetings so clearly described in the following pages, would by the Divine blessing, lay the children of the *present* generation under a similar weight of obligation to that which they so deeply feel; and devoutly praying for wisdom and grace, to train their own beloved children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," according to the good and holy example received by them, the children of the Authoress commend this work to the prayerful consideration of all persons interested in the responsible work of Christian education.

The writer desires to acknowledge the kindness of Mrs. Matheson, and other friends, for contributions made to this Manual.

March, 1865.

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History of Maternal Associations.

How we commenced.

As far back as the year 1834, Maternal Associations, or Mothers' Meetings, began to be held in this country. The memoir of Mrs. S. Huntington in America, and private letters from Mrs. Whittlesey, who edited "The Mother's Magazine" there, led to their establishment. The first attempt was made at Reading, by Mrs. Sherman; and in 1835 a Central Association was formed in London, consisting of ministers' wives and ladies of different religious denominations. They met first in a private house; but, as their numbers increased, they were kindly accommodated with a large room at the Sunday School Depository, Paternoster Row. The meetings were held monthly, and were open to the wives of missionaries, and to any ladies

properly introduced as seeking information concerning the mode in which these associations were carried into action. Successful efforts were made to organize associations at home and abroad, and occasional correspondence was maintained with those who conducted them. The poorer mothers were also sought out and drawn together in some of the worst parts of the Metropolis, in order to awaken them to their personal and relative duties, trusting, and not in vain, that the time would arrive when such meetings would become general.

HOW WE CONDUCTED THE MEETINGS.

Besides monthly meetings, it was customary, twice a year, for the mothers and their children under twelve years of age, to assemble, when a minister was invited to address them. The practice of selecting a topic for conversation from month to month, was attended with many advantages. Time was given for previous thought, and desultoriness was avoided. At the beginning of the year the subjects were given in by the members, and from these a selection was made and the list printed. It was found necessary, in conducting the meetings, to appoint a Superintendent and two Secretaries.

The former was expected to open the meeting by reading the Scriptures and prayer. It devolved on her also to lead the conversation and draw out the remarks of others. If conversation flagged, recourse was had to books, but chiefly to revive it. The secretaries read the minutes of the last meeting and any letters which had been received. Sufficient time was allowed for general business, and the whole terminated with singing and prayer.

Much will always depend on the lady who presides. She must have discernment and tact, so as to preserve order without formality, and give a cheerful and pleasant character to the meetings. It is most important to discountenance personal remarks or unprofitable discussions, and to see that every individual has that share of attention to which she is properly entitled.

After the Central Association was formed, a small manual was published, in order to awaken attention and furnish information relative to the meetings. It was entitled "Four Letters on Maternal Associations," with an appendix containing some very interesting particulars from friends in this country and in America. As this work is now out of print, and the subject itself as important as ever, we shall make a few extracts from this unpretending little volume.

GUIDING MOTIVES.

"What we every where want is a revival of that earnest, prayerful, and unwearied piety which dwelt in the mothers of Moses, Samuel, and Timothy. If we would be blessed with such children we must use the same efforts; but how few comparatively see the importance of the precious boon intrusted to their care, nor the bearing of the maternal character on all the relationships of life. We require to dwell habitually on the great and imperative study of training our children for heaven. Hasty and superficial views on the subject are not sufficient, and hence the advantage of having stated times at which we can recur to it, and of looking at it carefully in all its details. At this time we have schools for our children, from the Sunday and infant school to those of the most select and elevated character; but we must still have schools for mothers, where education can be a regular study, since, after all, it is from the mother that the earliest and most impressive lessons are received. Her words, her looks, her actions are imprinted on the young and susceptible heart, so that time itself cannot obliterate them. Who that truly believes *this* will not be

anxious for her own advancement in knowledge and piety? But, alas! how many a mother, even in our days, is either wrapped in selfish indifference, or mourning secretly over her unfitness, without courage to confess it, or resolution to employ the means of improvement which are within her reach? Are there not many such individuals in our narrow circle to whom a Maternal Association might prove invaluable? How many of us have been brought to feel that when with maternal experience we should be able to teach others, we are lamentably wanting in those habits and dispositions, on which the education of the young principally depends; and with this conviction pressing on the heart, how great has been the temptation to let things take their course, and to satisfy ourselves that those to whose instruction our children are confided will supply our deficiency."

Now, it was to give a new and powerful impulse to the cause of Christian education, that maternal meetings were first established. Those who originated them and were punctual in their attendance, soon found the benefit of social intercourse and united prayer. Doubts and scruples gradually gave way. They went forward in simplicity and singleness of purpose, and felt that the Divine strength was made perfect in their weakness.

THE NECESSITY PROVED.

After Maternal Associations had gained favour in our country, some excellent remarks appeared in one of the leading periodicals, which were very encouraging to those who conducted them. "All mothers," the writer observes, "are interested in the welfare of their offspring, and most of them would be thankful for any advice that would assist them in this important object: yet there are not many who think it necessary to bestow much attention on the *principles* of education. Few mothers, were they examined, would be able to give satisfactory reasons for their modes of treatment. And why is this? Because it is the custom to let education take its course, and because it is not the fashion to study human nature; because the mother knows little of her child's physical, mental, or moral constitution, and thinks it too much trouble to enquire into it. She knows not how to bring out the mind of her child: she never thinks of enquiring as to what means have been employed for its physical, intellectual, and moral development, and if those means are the best that could be employed. In short, ignorance—

distressing, woeful ignorance—concerning education prevails, and leaves the mother, in too many cases, incapable of performing towards her offspring that high office with which she is invested by nature, conscience, and revelation.

'Mothers must be taught, but how are they to be taught? They must teach themselves! How? They must unite; in short, they must form societies, they must meet together; read, talk, discuss, collect information of every kind that can be brought to bear on the health, the intellect, or the moral power of their offspring. They must make the art of family government their study; attain the secret of moral control; learn how to teach self-denial; how to enforce discipline; how to teach at all times and in all seasons; what *home* instruction ought to be; what *school* instruction ought to be; what education is being received by their children through servants, playmates, or the peculiar circumstances of their local situation; by books collaterally read; by conversation, and by a thousand other matters forming the atmosphere of a child in its early years.'

Dr. Alexander, also, in an admirable letter addressed to mothers, made the following observations. "The question is often asked, By whom shall Jacob arise? One answers one

thing, and one another; but if I may be permitted to give a *partial* answer, though I believe a *true* one, I would say by pious mothers, Yes. A woman had the unspeakable blessing of being the mother of our Lord and Saviour; so woman, collectively, shall be the mother of the church. Ten thousand Loises and Eunices will, at the same time, be training their little Timothys on the knee, and with sweet and persuasive speech instilling into their opening minds the words of those Holy Scriptures, 'which are able to make them wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.' A genuine and thorough reformation must commence in the family, which is the foundation of all social institutions—civil and religious! Here is the root whence springs the whole tree, with all its spreading and twining branches. And if true religion, to be general, must begin in the *domestic* circle, to whom will belong the chief agency and the most distinguished honor? Undoubtedly to pious mothers. Theirs must be the hands which plant the precious seed; theirs the prayers and tears which water the growing plant; theirs the kind, seasonable, and well-adapted instructions which distil into the tender susceptible mind like the gentle rain on the

tender grass, or the more imperceptible dew on the thirsty plant. Those are not the most important lectures which are, with solemn pomp, delivered in the schools; but those which flow sweetly from the affectionate lips of mothers to their docile and interesting group of little ones gathered around their knees. No eloquence equals that of a sensible pious mother, because no impressions made by human speech are so deep and indelible. These lessons, whether she knows it or not, she is engraving on fleshy tablets, from which the inscription can never be wholly obliterated. Impression after impression may be made on the same; but these have the advantage of being first and deepest, and when all the others have gone, these will be left."

We subjoin one other extract from the pen of an excellent minister, who held these meetings in great esteem, and had carefully studied the subject. He thus writes: "As there is no human power so durable and so valuable as well-directed maternal influence; no part of our labors in the ministry can be more important than calling forth and directing this influence—making mothers to feel their privileges and responsibilities, and leading them so to cultivate the minds and hearts of their children, and so to

restrain and govern them, that they may be prepared when the truths of the gospel may be brought to bear upon them, to yield to its teaching and its restraints. How can these objects be most effectually secured? I answer, the surest method is through Maternal Associations. We know how ministerial associations encourage *our* hearts, and stimulate *us* in the discharge of our duties; and how the interchange of professional sympathies endears *us* to each other: what then must be the effect of these meetings on mothers themselves?

"Nowhere can a minister be placed with greater hope of being kindly listened to than in such an assembly, especially by those who are young and just entering on the solemn duties of family government. These associations will aid in securing uniformity of domestic education and moral culture; they will also cultivate a taste for reading and instruction on this important subject, and others which are akin to it. Having long seen the salutary influence of these meetings on mothers themselves, on their families, and on the ministrations of the gospel, I would urge each one of my brethren in the ministry to secure, as speedily as possible, the formation of a Maternal Association among the people of his charge, and to aid it in every way he can."

AN ILLUSTRATION.

There is an interesting anecdote in the life of Melancthon, which shows that in former times mothers have met occasionally if not regularly, for religious purposes, as many of them do now. "During a time of great depression, when the Reformers were consulting on the best means to be adopted, Melancthon returned to a room he had just left with a bright countenance, and apparently much relieved. Luther, astonished, said, 'What now, Philip?'

"'O, sirs,' replied Melancthon, 'let us not be discouraged; for I have seen our noble protectors, and such as, I may venture to say, will prove invincible to every foe.'

"Luther, thrilling with pleasure, exclaimed, 'Who, and where are they?'

"'Ah,' said Melancthon, 'they are the wives of our parishioners and their little children, whose prayers I have just heard, and which I am sure God will answer.'"

PROGRESS OF THE WORK.

These maternal meetings, which had for awhile to contend with prejudice and opposition, have

gradually obtained favor. Amongst the poor they have been taken up vigorously, and are doing great good. In many instances, needle-work has been introduced; and amongst the working classes, lending libraries and savings' banks have been established in connection with them. Much benefit has resulted from the circulation of such periodicals as "The Mothers' Magazine," "The Mothers' Friend," "The Mothers' Treasury;" and of late, many pens have been most usefully employed in aiding this cause. Where there is such a variety of excellent publications to notice and commend, it seems almost invidious to particularise; but at the end of this little volume will be found a catalogue of educational works generally known and approved, though by no means all which are entitled to notice and approbation.

EXTENSION OF EFFORT.

It is very encouraging to know, from correspondence with missionaries in different parts of the world, that mothers' meetings are now frequent in our different stations, and that they are productive of much good.

The object of the writer, in bringing out this

publication, is to furnish what help she can towards the training of the young. Having taken an active part in these social exercises for the last thirty years, she can most cordially recommend them. A selection of various topics has been made from the Minute Books which were kept by the Central Association, of which she was president.

A few articles have been kindly added by a friend, who belonged at one time to that pleasant circle. Another lady, who conducts a maternal meeting in the north of England, has contributed two valuable papers, which will be read with much advantage.

We have, no doubt, in this day, many religious privileges and helps in the training of our children formerly little known; but we have also peculiar dangers to meet and to overcome. An eminent Scotch divine, alluding to these, observes, "As my parental experience increases, my views are changing fast as to the degree of conformity to the world which we should allow to our children. I am horror-struck to count up the profligate children of pious persons, and even of ministers. The door at which these influences enter, to countervail parental instruction and example, I am persuaded, is yielding to the ways of what is *mistakenly* called good *society*.

By dress, books, and amusements, an atmosphere is formed which is not that of Christianity. More than ever do I feel that our families must stand in a kind but determined opposition to the fashions of the world, breasting the waves like the Eddystone lighthouse; and I have found nothing which requires more courage and independence than to rise *even a little* but *decidedly* above the par of the religious world around us. Surely, the way in which we commonly go is not the way of self-denial and cross-bearing which the New Testament talks of. Then is the offence of the cross ceased. Our slender influence in the circle of our friends is often to be traced to our leaving so little difference to be seen between us." Who shall say that these lamentations are not justified, and that these admonitions are not most seasonable?

In soliciting indulgence for this small effort, the writer feels that she has done little but bring together the observations of others. She relies, however, on the help and the blessing of Him who delights to honor the feeblest instrument, and whose strength is made perfect in human weakness.

EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.

I.

WHAT ARE AND WHAT ARE NOT TO BE REGARDED AS EVIDENCES OF PIETY IN THE CHILDREN OF RELIGIOUS PARENTS?

1st.—What are not evidences to be relied on? Much talking on religious subjects; an anxiety to attend favorite preachers; an eagerness to take part in religious societies; personal regard to Christian relatives and ministers.

2ndly.—What are evidences to be desired? Secret retirement for prayer; daily study of the Scriptures; a readiness to give up their own will to promote the comfort of others; obedience and love to parents and other relatives; conscientiousness in *little* things; accuracy in stating facts; desire to improve time; a wish to be useful at home; tenderness and compassion towards the suffering; readiness to acknowledge

faults, and a constant effort to avoid them when pointed out; a disposition to listen to religious conversation, and to take part in religious services.

Parents are often incredulous respecting the conversion of very young children, and do not take sufficient pains to awaken their minds, by pressing divine truths on their attention.

Mothers should, if possible, superintend their children's devotions till they can be trusted alone. Care should be taken not to oblige children to express *all* they feel on religious subjects, unless they do so freely; nor should what they say in confidence be repeated. Those who are naturally proud, very much dislike to have their feelings observed; and may sometimes be suspected of an indifference they do not really feel.

II.

THE COURSE TO BE PURSUED WITH YOUNG PERSONS WHO ARE IMPATIENT OF CONTROL AND REPROOF, AND WHO ARE INCLINED TO JUSTIFY THEMSELVES ON ALL OCCASIONS.

Locke says, "The love of dominion is the origin of most vicious habits that are ordinary

and natural, and may be seen at a very early age, in these two things. 1st.—In crying, growing peevish and sullen for nothing but to have their own way; they contend for a ready compliance from all about them, especially from those who stand near or beneath them in age or degree. 2ndly.—In their desire to have things to be *theirs.* They would have property and possession; pleasing themselves with the power which this seems to give them, and the right they have to dispose of them as they please. Begin early to study the character and temper of your child, for the physiognomy of the mind is most discernible before art and cunning have taught them to hide their deformities, and conceal their evil inclinations under a fair outside. Seeds of vice must not be suffered to take deep root in the mind, but must be carefully rooted out as soon as they appear; and a parent's *authority* ought to influence the child from the very dawn of knowledge."

Hannah More says: "Strong and pertinacious tempers, of which perhaps obstinacy is the leading indication, under skilful management often turn out steady and sterling characters; while from softer clay a firm and vigorous virtue is but seldom produced." Mrs. M. adds: "An early habitual restraint is peculiarly important

to the future character and happiness of women." Children should not be suffered to associate the idea of unkindness with the discovery of their faults, or, on the contrary, ascribe to love, that blindness to their imperfections which sometimes prevails. Faults should be pointed out faithfully, but with concern and tenderness; generally in private, and never with an air of triumph or anything like ridicule, so as to create irritation and dislike. It is well, occasionally, to point out faults by letter, when children are absent; they have then time to think more calmly, and on their return may, perhaps, start afresh. When conviction has been really produced, we should not *always* insist on a direct acknowledgment, but be satisfied with silence on the part of the offender. We should be careful, too, never to exaggerate a fault nor to dwell unnecessarily upon it. Candor and ingenuousness should be recommended, and carefully practised by parents themselves. Opportunities should be taken to speak of their value, and to guard them against a self-justifying temper at those times when they are most accessible to good impressions. A reluctance to see and to confess our faults should be represented as the common tendency of our degenerate nature, manifested by our first parents, by Cain, &c. On the other hand, we

should shew our children that the direct tendency of the gospel is to produce meekness, humility, and a free and candid confession of our sins to God and to man. Take the example of the prodigal son. Parents should not express astonishment at their children's faults so much as grief; and they should dwell less on the individual offence than on the deep fountain of depravity within them, whence all their evil conduct proceeds. Children often reflect on Providence, or excuse themselves by blaming others. Let us be careful, too, in dealing with froward children, not to treat them as if their characters were formed and nothing better might be expected from them; there is great danger, by this means, of destroying hopeful effort and self-respect.

III.

THE BEST WAY OF DEALING WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE RELUCTANT TO BE TAUGHT.

Some children are prone to affect a considerable show of indifference when they should welcome instruction. They do this by trifling, and also by superciliousness. Whenever this

disposition prevails, it may generally be traced to some error in the early treatment of a child, and not unfrequently to vanity on the part of the parent or teacher. A child who is much caressed or admired as forward or clever, is apt to be conceited and to undervalue the ability of others. If, from the first, instruction is regarded as a benefit to be received with gratitude and attention, this is not so likely to be the case. There is in some quick children an impatience, which is greatly aggravated if the teacher is slow and tedious in conveying her ideas; few things have a greater tendency to produce listlessness in a pupil than this. One method to correct a self-sufficient temper is to throw a child very much on his own resources, so that he may have to *labor* for the attainment of that knowledge he was too proud to receive. Children who manifest an unwillingness to be taught at one time, should sometimes have to wait at another. Still, much care should be taken not to create *unnecessary* mortification, nor to let any punishment appear to be vindictive. "The meekness of wisdom" must be ever manifest, and passages of Scripture should often be adduced to exhibit the right disposition of a child; such as 1 Cor. viii. 2. Rom. xi. 25; xii. 16. Prov. xxvi. 12, 16. Prov. xxiii. 9. Prov. viii. 33. Deut. iv. 9.

The temper in which instruction is communicated, has much to do with the temper in which it is received. An affectionate, cheerful, unassuming manner wins upon a pupil, and has a greater tendency to counteract conceit and pride than many direct methods. Let parents and teachers exemplify the spirit they would cultivate, and let them shew that they are not above learning from any one, however *inferior*, even from a child. See Dwight's "Christian Father." Miss Hamilton's "Harmony Between the Virtues."

IV.

WHAT CONSIDERATIONS SHOULD OPERATE UPON US IN SEEKING THE EARLY CONVERSION OF OUR CHILDREN?

The glory of God; the value of the soul; a parent's influence continued in that of her offspring; the consideration so frequently presented to us in the Old Testament—That eminent piety is seldom attained without early piety; the heart and conscience more susceptible in youth; the influence of *young* Christians often very great over others, especially in their own homes;

the evil they may do if they grow up unconverted; the uncertainty of life; parental responsibility; and that long delay renders conversion more difficult.

V.

THE DUTY OF MASTERS AND MISTRESSES TO THEIR SERVANTS, AND THE BEST METHODS OF ATTACHING AND INTERESTING THEM.

Henry, Scott, and Doddridge were brought forward as admirable patterns of family instruction. A selection from the life of Philip Henry was read, on the mode of conducting family worship. He recommends early hours, to avoid interruption and weariness. He began with singing, everyone having a book, then read the Scriptures, and prayed. He was seldom long, and never tedious. Scott's son observes, "Few persons lived with his father, but were brought under religious influence; not so much by preaching *to* them as by living *before* them." Dr. Doddridge lays stress upon reproving servants mildly and privately, considering servants as children. Anderson suggests, that we should treat our servants with that consideration with which we should wish our superiors to treat us.

behaviour to servants should be dictated by justice, impartiality, steadiness, and kindness; we should notice their trials, and sympathise with their joys, entering as far as we can into their personal and relative interests. Our servants should not see us irritated by trifles, and selfish in our requirements. We should reprove calmly. Sunday visiting should be prohibited, but they should have suitable opportunities afforded them for visiting their friends, and having recreation at other times. Advice may often be advantageously given, with respect to laying out or saying up their wages, which should be paid punctually. It may be well to speak to them, occasionally, after an exciting or solemn sermon, or an alarming providence, and to pray *with* them should they seem to be in a suitable frame of mind. Special attention should be given to nursemaids who have the care of children, by putting books in their way, or pointing out to them the great importance of the charge entrusted to them. Mrs. Taylor's Present to Servants, and "Ruth Clark, or the Single Talent Well Employed," are very suitable gifts. Religious servants may become a great blessing in a family, and should always be preferred where practicable. It is well to interest them in schemes of benevolence—employing them to prepare and carry

soup, medicine, clothing, &c., to the poor, and encouraging them to share in the privilege of ministering to the necessities of others. By all means keep them from evil companionship; never send them to public-houses, nor suffer them to be out late at night; know where they worship on the Sabbath, and if possible let them attend where you go; discountenance idle conversation and reports; have a suitable collection of books for them, and ascertain that they have each of them a Bible and Hymn book, and if they go to church, a Prayer Book.

VI.

On entrusting money to children for their own use, so as to form habits of forethought, benevolence, and economy

It is important to impress children early with the responsibility which attaches to property. Whatever they receive in a regular way should be accounted for. The allowance should be paid regularly, and be increased according to their age and the use they make of it. Let them learn to exercise self-denial, and early taste the delights of benevolence. It is a good plan to

ıce them to subscribe towards a Bible for nselves, and afterwards they will, probably, .ch greater value to it, and be ready to tinue their contribution for some one else. ldren are more interested in objects of evolence near at hand, such as relieving a r person whom they can visit, or making nents for a little child in their neighbour- d, than for objects at a distance. It is well herish the disposition to give little tokens of ction to parents and other relatives on their h-days. An allowance for clothes may be sidered desirable for daughters on leaving ool, but not so as to make them independent heir immediate relatives. It is important to ience them to act in accordance with the ımstances in which Providence has placed n; for want of this, whilst some are tempted xtravagance in dress, others may fall into opposite error. Generally, it is believed that ng persons who are permitted to pay for r own clothes, will be more neat and careful ı others, and also that they will more readily eciate the value of many articles they previously despised. In some cases, ad- age may result from rewarding children for ctuality, neatness, &c., but care must be n not to encourage avarice. Savings' banks

are often but not always beneficial; in some instances they have been found to cherish a parsimonious temper.

VII.

THE CONDUCT OF PARENTS TOWARDS THEIR CHILDREN IN REGARD TO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

The subject is one of great and increasing importance, as early conversions are multiplying in our churches. The conduct of parents in regard to the passover is very much what should be pursued with regard to the Lord's Supper. It is important to speak freely about it, so as to remove from it all that mysticism in which it is sometimes involved. At twelve years of age, children were brought forward to receive the passover, and at twelve our Saviour was brought up to the temple; which facts shew that, under the Jewish dispensation, children were expected at a very early period to attend the sacred festivals. Children are strengthened in their principles by being openly united to the visible church, if indeed they have partaken of Divine grace. It is a safeguard in the season of temptation, and may be a means of exciting enquiry in

the minds of others. It is a question, whether a child may not be fit to be a partaker of the Lord's Supper who is not qualified for all the duties of a church member.

A little girl in one of the western provinces of America, had given evidence of a decided change of heart. At one of the meetings of the Presbytery, she told her mother she wished to join the church. The mother named it to the father, but he waived it, thinking she was too young. A year elapsed, and the child, being then seven, renewed her request. The father said he would mention her desire to the assembly; on his return, he told her they thought her too young. The child wept much, and at length, with some effort, said, "Father, may I see the gentlemen myself?" The parent, overcome by her importunity, said she should, and accordingly obtained permission for her to appear. At first the child was abashed by the sight of so many grave and reverend men, and seemed as if she had nothing to say; but on being asked why she wished to partake of the Lord's Supper, she answered, "Because Jesus Christ has said, 'Do this in remembrance of me.'"

"Yes, my dear," replied one of the elders, "but that was spoken to his disciples, who were all grown-up men."

The child hesitated, and then said, "But Jesus Christ has little disciples as well as great disciples, and I think if He were here now and I were to tell Him what I want, He would say, 'Suffer the little child to come to My Supper, and forbid her not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

The whole company were melted, and one of them rising, laid his hand on the head of the child, pouring forth a grateful acknowledgment to Him who "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hath ordained praise." The child was accordingly accepted as a communicant, and was a consistent Christian. Another case deserves notice, of a child ten-and-a-half years old, who wished to partake of the Lord's Supper; some of the older members objected, but were overcome when the little fellow replied, in the well-known words of the hymn,—

"'Tis easier work if we begin
To serve the Lord betimes."

Children should attend the celebration of religious ordinances, when their age and other circumstances admit. Dr. Doddridge, Matthew Henry, and President Edwards all encourage early profession. Professor Gooderich, writing on the early conversion of children, says, "Parents are hardly prepared for the scenes they are witnessing in their own habitations. As the

young have received greater attention, more amongst them have been converted. The Sabbath school, religious books, plain simple tracts, and maternal associations have wrought and are working moral wonders. Parents should not expect their children, ordinarily, to be exercised with such deep and protracted distress as persons of maturer age often experience. Their consciences are more tender, and they have not sinned so flagrantly nor so long." Parents should be circumspect in their own conduct in reference to the ordinance.

Some danger may arise from early profession. Children are liable, without care, to be lifted up and made too much of. Doddridge's work on Early Communion, and Lavington's Addresses, with Bickersteth's "Welcome Guest," and other guides, are well-fitted to be put into the hands of young people.

VIII.

THE MOTHER'S IMPORTANT POSITION AND HER SPECIAL DUTIES.

The tenderness and patience of the mother are admirably suited to the slowness of apprehension and timidity of a little child. Character,

in its main principles, may be said to be formed in the mother's lap, so that wherever you see any thing very striking in a child, it is generally found that he owes much to an intelligent and gifted mother. She should carefully consider the trust committed to her, as it regards the body and the mind; for deformities and diseases of body are often induced by neglect in childhood. Nourishment, as much as possible, should be simple, regular, and unexciting. There is no derangement of the stomach which does not affect the whole system. Inordinate craving for food is usually indicative of disease. Careful regard should be had to ventilation, exercise, and cleanliness. Combe's Physiology contains excellent advice on these matters. All dabbling in medicine should be avoided, except in very simple cases; yet, certain great laws, affecting equally the physical and moral constitution, should be carefully studied. Such as the influence of the skin, proper warmth, the education of the senses, the eye, the ear, the voice, &c. A mother has to lay the foundation; and as she lays it will, in all probability, be the future character of the child. In order to do this, she should study the laws of mind; this has much to do with the future intellectual progress of both sexes. Knowledge in the mother is

absolutely needful, to meet the spirit of enquiry and the scientific appetite awakening around her. She should be able to classify and enter into their various studies and pursuits, so as to establish her influence over her young ones; and be able to form a correct idea of their several capacities. She should aim, more especially, to draw out their affections and arouse their consciences. She should enlist their services early and regularly in benevolent engagements, and watch, with extreme jealousy, against any departure from honesty and truth. Mothers cannot change the heart, but they can bring their children to Jesus and put many difficulties out of their way.

They often find much to struggle with. Want of information, feebleness of health, innumerable engagements, inability to carry out a regular system, but especially the want of deeper piety. An excellent writer says, "Mothers, give your children every advantage that truth can give, that a holy example can give, that much pleading of the promises can give, and if the Saviour comes not at the first knocking, knock again, for He says, 'The door *shall* be opened.'"

IX.

WHETHER PARENTS ARE RIGHT IN PLACING THEIR CHILDREN UNDER THE CARE OF IRRELIGIOUS PERSONS.

This subject is very comprehensive, not confined to their education, but also as it regard placing them out in life. The first care respecting our children should be a religious one. They are confided to us by God, and we shall have to give an account of our stewardship. Their minds are so susceptible, that much importance attaches to early impressions. We should, as parents, watch carefully the influences at work in the nursery. The training of nursemaids is the peculiar province of mothers, so as to give them correct knowledge and to direct them in the use of it. More intercourse should be kept up with them than is usual; and it is well to read to them such books as "Emma and her Nurse" Mrs. Stowe's work on Early Training and The Nurserymaid's Diary. The second period of serious responsibility, is, giving children up to teachers. Religious characters should be chosen. We cannot expect to receive God's blessing, but as we fulfil His will. "Them that honor me I

will honor." All are influenced by their equals, and children we must expect to be so more than others; so that if they are brought up with the children of irreligious parents, they will, most probably, form friendships amongst them. The heads of a school may be pious, but those who assist them and come most in contact with the pupils may be very deficient. This is not easily discovered, but should not be overlooked.

When a watch goes wrong, it is not enough to move the hands, you must set the regulator: so it is with the mind, and an irreligious teacher is not competent to do this. He may instruct well in certain branches of education, but he cannot form character. Parents are apt to be ambitious, they want their children to be great rather than good; to have the honor which cometh from man rather than that which cometh from God only. In schools not conducted on Christian principles, emulation is apt to be unduly cultivated, so as to encourage envy and strife. In administering correction, also, there is a danger that children will be corrected on false principles, and their offences, as committed against God, be scarcely recognized. Parents may do much for their children by securing for them a decidedly spiritual atmosphere.

The next important period is that in which

an occupation is selected for life. We should beware of placing a youth amongst gay or sceptical companions. We should also ascertain the kind of domestic life he will lead, how his leisure is to be spent, and especially his Sabbaths. If parents part with their children, they should try to secure the kind and watchful eye of some minister or friend at hand, and also keep up a regular correspondence during separation, so as to counteract or prevent any evil influences which may arise.

X.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT, WITH THE PROMISE ANNEXED.

The great duty of children, is, to obey those who have been the instruments of their being; God and Nature have given parents authority to command. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." This obedience includes an inward reverence as well as an outward expression of it. There is a natural equity in it, God has enjoined it, and it is highly becoming. Honor implies reverence, obedience, relief, and maintenance, if necessary.

It is called "the first commandment with promise," because it is a chief command—the first in the second table. Outward prosperity and long life are blessings promised to those who keep it; not that it is *always* so, but, ordinarily, obedience is thus rewarded, and when it is not, it is made up by something better. The gospel has temporal promises as well as spiritual ones.

Among the improvements of modern times, it is to be feared, the growth of filial obedience cannot be specified. Not only sons but daughters have adopted something of that spirit of independence and disdain of control which characterises the times. The rights of men have been discussed, the rights of women also, and it follows that the next step will be the rights of children. The control of parents, over their children is the most absolute government, and yet the most indulgent. It resembles the Divine government more than any other. A parent, to be respected, must be consistent. Consistency is essential to all true dignity. This character seen in a parent will invariably gain the highest filial veneration.

Our Saviour Himself furnishes a very beautiful example of filial submission, and gives us a contrast in the case of the prodigal son. Wisdom,

patience, faithfulness, kindness, and consta
are rarely demanded in any concern, so
ceasingly, or in so great a degree, as in
Christian education of children.

Many passages of Scripture elucidate
subject. Deut. xxvii. 16. Levit. xix. 3. P
i. 8; xxx. 17. Jer. xxxv. 18, 19. Matt. xv. 4,
Eph. vi. 2. 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2, &c. Ander
in his work on the Domestic Constitut
speaks of David as an extraordinary man, v
to the honour of his father, is frequently in
duced as "The Son of Jesse," and he asks,
it too much to suppose that the foundatio
the Divine choice rested on his past filial ob
ence?" If God knew Abraham that he wc
command his children, so He knew David, t
he would obey, as he had already done. "
will do all the things which I will." Whe
deep distress, so highly did he think of
beloved mother, as to plead his descent from
"Save the son of thine handmaid;" and to
very close of life he is held up as "the sten
Jesse."

The filial affections may in various ways
considered as the basis of the whole moral st
ture; for according to the manner in which t
are formed and cultivated, the happiness of
individual, and the excellence of the en

character greatly depend. *Correct views of these affections* are of incalculable importance to the *cultivation* of them.

The first exercise of filial affection we denominate *Love;* from thence springs a desire to please. In a wise method of training, restraint will be necessary, and this introduces Fear, which in moderation is needful, and leads to obedience, though it is a serious evil when carried to excess.

As the child advances in knowledge, and as the conscience acquires power, the sense of obligation, the perception of his parents' virtues, the feelings which he is led to entertain towards God, &c., contribute to form and deepen impressions of duty, gratitude, and respect. Parents naturally desire that their children should possess and manifest towards them a lively and durable affection, and this not only for their own personal gratification, but that they may acquire and maintain the best possible influence over them in the future. The true point to be aimed at, is for parents so to temper their conduct towards their children, that whilst they allow them all those enjoyments which are consistent with present health and circumstances, it shall not be at the expence of any advantage hereafter. It is admitted, that it is not easy for parents to

maintain that mild persevering firmness which is essential in moral education; but when the endeavours to obtain or preserve it, are prompted by warm and real tenderness, they will seldom fail to be successful.

Parents must not expect from children *equal* indications of affection in all circumstances. The *liveliness* of feeling is one thing, the *steadiness* of affection another. Little attentions should be valued and encouraged, but not made burdensome to children. Expressions of affection should not be the subject of praise, nor result from bribery or reproach; much less should they be put in comparison with proofs of submission and obedience.

Affectionate and well-trained children learn confidence in their parents more from the want of any thing to destroy confidence, than from the actual perception of the benefits resulting from parental guidance. It may be well sometimes to direct the attention to our reasons for desiring one thing or forbidding another; but as a general rule, we should begin by forming the habit of unquestioning obedience, and accustom children to exercise confidence in our habitual truth and kindness, by pointing out how much parents submit to and undertake in order to do *them* good, and upon their fitness to judge of what is best.

As the understanding becomes sufficiently ripe to reason, it is important for them to be shewn clearly the Divine mind respecting their duty. If the disposition to submit has been formed, we have a much stronger hold on the mind than by making the "why" and "why not" the source of obedience to our requirements or prohibitions. It is a mark of good government when, instead of exacting obedience, the wish of the parent is sufficient to obtain it. Parents should be scrupulous not to interfere with each other's commands. The authority of each should be employed to support the other. Where there is not unanimity, great difficulties arise, and children easily take advantage of the differences they are quick to discover.

Those modes of address should be taught and required which are expressive of affection and respect. Affection should not degenerate into familiarity. It is agreeable to what we know of the laws of mind and experience to believe that outward modes of respect assist in generating or strengthening the inward feeling. It is requisite that children should *honor* as well as *obey*. In the present day we are too much *afraid* of *forms*, but small attentions to a parent's comfort and convenience should be sedulously encouraged. As children grow up, they should

become more and more our companions and friends, and this they will usually be if parents have been faithful in performing their duty.

XI.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHILDREN ON THEIR PARENTS.

A writer observes—"*We* educate our children, but more frequently our children educate *us*." How much tenderness and generosity spring into the parent's heart from the cradle of the child. *Our* authority over our children passes away with the period of instruction; but *their* influence over us increases with time, and we become gradually influenced by the characters we have been striving to form. How common is the remark, "I have done this or that because my son or my daughter thought it best." This influence of the younger over the elder naturally gains strength as the one comes forth with new vigour and energy, and the other passes into the vale of years, desiring and needing repose. How important it is, then, that the power which is eventually to affect us so intimately should be essentially correct and holy. The happy results

of such faithful guidance on our part, may be a blooming race of grandchildren, rekindling all the tender affection of other days, and vividly recalling the memory of their parents' infant charms.

The children we are training may, perhaps, minister to us in spiritual things, and help to quicken our piety when our minds become feeble. In Scripture history we are shewn the influence of children over their parents, as in the history of Jacob and Manoah.

Children who have a better education than their parents had, are apt to presume upon it; and parents, on the other hand, are sometimes tempted to give way unduly, so as to surrender the respect and consideration to which they are entitled. Sunday-school children often exert a very beneficial influence on their families and ungodly relatives. This has been seen in India, amongst Mussulmen, as well as in England and other parts. The Reports of various Temperance Societies also disclose the beneficial influence of children over their parents; tending not only to partial reformation of character, but resulting in their genuine conversion to God.

XII.

WHAT SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS ARE TO BE BORNE IN MIND IN THE EDUCATION OF OUR DAUGHTERS?

The object of their education, one of our best writers observes, "is not so much to fit them to ornament society at large, as to vivify and enlighten a home;" to prepare for life—its unavoidable trials, its weighty duties, its inevitable termination. We must cultivate conscientiousness, unselfishness, consistency, and simplicity; teaching them that they have *influence*, and are responsible for its employment. Hannah More remarks—"I would have a female qualified for her situation as a wife, mother, and mistress of a family. Mental improvement must be carefully attended to, but not to the neglect of household affairs. She who is to preside over a family should be intimately acquainted with whatever can preserve order or promote comfort. It will not do for all her time to be given to literature; for learned ladies, without order, economy, and frugality,

> "May do well for maidens and aunts,
> But believe me, they'll never make wives."

Fenelon remarks, that "in the education of a young woman her condition should be regarded, and the sphere of life in which she will probably move. If a girl is to live in the country, turn her attention betimes to the occupations of the country; cultivate a love of Nature, and shew her the blessings of a simple active life. Initiate her in the various methods of doing good amongst the children and the poor, and encourage such amusements as will make home cheerful and attractive." The 31st chapter of Proverbs is a beautiful and profitable subject of meditation for mothers, both for the formation of their daughters' characters, and the improvement of their own. Here we see conjugal fidelity, industry, economy, household management, the right government of servants and children, united to spiritual wisdom and the fear of God.

Our sons are trained by many years of study for one of the professions, for science, or trade. Should not our daughters have corresponding advantages? Are the duties to which they are destined so inferior as not to require systematic instruction, skill, prudence, and experience? The most common workman, on the principle of self-interest, deems it essential to his success in trade to serve a due apprenticeship; and surely those whose influence in society

is so powerful for good or evil, not only for the present but the future, should have the best possible attention bestowed upon them.

In the training of our daughters, we should never forget that we must train them for two worlds. For this life, they should be fortified to endure trials; vexations in family matters; disappointments and interruptions in plans of usefulness; the waywardness, petulance, and weakness of children; the impertinence, ignorance, and dulness of domestics. In order to bear up well under these perpetual difficulties, not only does a woman need much grace from above, but she wants also physical vigor, self-control, and a well-balanced mind.

Hannah More gives a comprehensive view of what kind of education is requisite to prepare young people for domestic happiness. "That which will tend to form a friend and companion as a wife; that which will inculcate principle, polish taste, regulate the temper, cultivate reason, subdue the passions, direct the feelings, habituate to reflection and self-denial, and more especially that which will refer all actions, feelings, sentiments, tastes, and passions, to the love and the fear of God."

XIII.

THE MOST LIKELY METHODS TO AWAKEN THE CONSCIENCES OF CHILDREN.

In the 12th chapter of the 2nd Book of Samuel, we see the method God took to awaken the conscience of David. Soon after the sin was committed, the prophet was sent, and the first appeal was made to the king's understanding, allowing no time for his conscience to be seared. The workings of conscience in early life are admirably shewn by Abbott, in the account of Alonzo, in his work entitled "The Way to do Good." One object of this history is, to shew that when a child has, from infancy, been rightly trained, the conscience generally continues tender, and prevents the sinner in his downward career. It is designed to shew, also, that to operate effectually on the conscience, nothing is so powerful as the exhibition of the Saviour's grace. Parents should tell their children of a suffering Saviour; it has a tendency to promote penitence, humility, and love.

In trying to bring home conviction of sin, the *manner* of doing it is all-important. There should be *real* tenderness, no impatience, no reproach. A child should feel that a mother's

love dictates all she says, and that her lips speak truth. She should dwell on sin, rather as offensive to God, than injurious to man. She should shew how God, against whom we sin, is daily loading us with blessings; that He is still ready to forgive; that He desires to make us holy that we may be happy, and that there is nothing but misery in disobeying and departing from Him. The golden rule should be illustrated also, by bringing home to the individual child how he or she would feel if treated harshly or dishonestly. Appropriate seasons should be watched for and improved when the mind is thoughtful, such as a time of personal or relative affliction, at the death of friends, after a thunder storm, or amidst grand and beautiful scenery. Success may sometimes attend a selection of Scripture passages, adapted to the occasion, read over by the parent and child, and then turned into prayer. Children should be taught to examine the workings of their own minds, to trace back their actions to the thoughts which suggested them, and to discover the fountain of all evil within. They should see that Satan is a deceiver and always prepared with his temptations.

Scripture Biography may be turned to excellent account, and incidents in the lives of individuals may often shew the progress of

iniquity. Our own experience will greatly assist us in dealing with the consciences of others, and especially with our own children.

XIV.

SHOULD CHILDREN BE ALLOWED TO READ AT THEIR OWN DISCRETION?

Of course we should at once decide in the negative; at the same time, considerable latitude may usually be given. When there is too much restraint, it leads to deceit. It is desirable, in the case of young children, for mothers to be well acquainted with the books they put into their children's hands; and to be careful that none are lent to them without their knowledge. The kind of books they read, is of as much importance to their minds as wholesome food is to the body. Books which are prejudicial to some minds are useful to others. When it can be done, mothers should try to ascertain what children know of one book before they give them another. Children are fond of tales, and if they are well selected and read aloud, good may often result from them. They elicit observation and develope individual character. The danger is, that they may so absorb the

attention as to set aside more important pursuits As children advance, courses of reading shoulc be taken up, adapted to the *age, character,* anc circumstances of the young. History, natura philosophy, travels, biography, the evidences o Christianity, &c., should all in due order b(regarded, together with poetry and other work: of imagination. Knowledge, *systematically* ac quired, is likely to turn to far more accoun than that which is the result of desultor reading. Sir James Mackintosh regretted through life, that his reading when young hac been of this cast.

XV.

WHAT DISPOSITIONS OF MIND AND HABITS OF LIFE ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO PARENTS AND ESPECIALLY TO MOTHERS?

Sympathy, quickness of perception, patience self-possession, self-denial, cheerfulness, order consistency, tact, activity, and perseverance. Every requirement the mother makes from a child should be definite and well understood. Frequent reproof and severe remarks on *little* things should be avoided. Implicit obedience should be required; firmness, decision, and

honesty should mark correction. Parents should be the friends as well as the rulers of the young; and children should discover, from their whole conduct, that their supreme desire is to train them for heaven. God's conduct towards His people is a model for family government.

XVI.

THE BEST WAY OF FILLING UP THE HOURS OF THE SABBATH, THAT IT MAY NOT BE A WEARINESS, BUT A DELIGHT TO CHILDREN.

A judicious writer has said, "Make the day and the Word of God sweet to the young, lovely in their eyes; take them at least in the morning of the Sabbath, to hear some faithful under-shepherd, and then, as never-dying souls yourselves, devote your time to the spiritual benefit of the never-dying souls around you; souls, too, in whom *you* have so deep an interest; souls, too, for whom you will be called to give an account." "There are two weighty reasons why all possible efforts should be made to interest the young in the Bible and the Sabbath. First, the Lord of the Sabbath has commanded us to reverence it; and secondly, national

prosperity is dependant upon its observance." Jer. xvii., xix., xxvi.

As much as possible Sunday lessons should be voluntary. It is a good plan to have a stated time for going over the sermon, and hearing what each child can remember, supplying, as far as may be, the deficiency.

It must be borne in mind that children are active, and require frequent change of employment; during childhood, therefore, recourse may be had to various dissected maps and lessons, such as "The Exodus of the Israelites," Noah's Ark, "The Life of St. Paul," or Scripture Bricks. Then there are prints of Old and New Testament History to be examined and talked over; prints of Scripture Natural History; of the Manners and Customs of the Jews; Pictorial Sunday Books, by Kitto; and "Evening Hours with my Children," containing twelve beautiful prints, published by *Nisbet*. Parents will do well also to keep a portfolio of loose pictures, calling it the Sunday folio. The advantage of pictures is, that they arrest attention, speak to the mind clearly and powerfully, and excite curiosity. The *time* for picture instruction is the first stage of childhood.

Interrogatory games and Scripture questions on cards are very useful. It is also pleasant to

children to question one another; and this may be done vocally, or by writing questions and distributing them on slips of paper.

A box of letters is a valuable assistance, so as to put together texts of scripture.

Alphabetical texts and verses of hymns often afford agreeable occupation, especially when sitting round the fire after dinner or tea; nor must we omit to mention singing of suitable hymns and pieces of sacred music, chosen by themselves. Another favorite exercise is to think of a person, a place, or a circumstance in the Bible, and to allow others to find it out by guessing and questioning.

Elder children may take subjects and find out what is said about them in the Bible, or make a sketch of some Scripture character. Writing a sermon from memory is an excellent occupation. Transposing hymns from verse to prose is very useful, and studying the places of note in the Holy Land, with events connected with them. Missionary researches, &c., may be advantageously studied, and the biography of pious people, children, and adults.

As young people advance, they should be encouraged to study Scripture doctrines and the evidences of Christianity, not casually, but

systematically, consulting the best writers, and making notes of what they read.

Preparing little lessons for younger children may be encouraged as a profitable exercise, and valuable especially in prospect of the time when those we are instructing shall have to teach others either in Sunday schools or at home.

Relating useful narratives or anecdotes in turn may often lead to profitable conversation. A question box should be kept in every family, and those who can should drop their questions into it.

It is well to have a box also for Missionary contributions, to be on the breakfast table of a Sunday morning, to distinguish the day and encourage a spirit of liberality.

Teaching poor children, cottage visitation, &c., may be looked to as young people become fitted for it by age and capability; but they must not be pressed into these services too eagerly, lest they should be discouraged or grow weary of the work.

The success, however, of all such plans and efforts, like every other duty of a mother, must largely depend on the spirit in which she carries them out. Going simply to the Scriptures for a true idea of the Sabbath, we find a holy *rest*

characterizing it in the Old Testament, and a holy triumph pervading it in the New. These ideas, in all their kindly and generous bearing on the welfare of others, will commend themselves more easily to the minds of young children, than merely authoritative command. The latter, indeed, will be greatly enforced and strengthened, by their being led to understand its all-merciful design. But, fully to accomplish this, the mother must aim at the possession in her own heart of the blessed repose and sacred joy the Sabbath is intended to represent. These will, of course, diffuse a more than ordinary tenderness over her whole demeanour; and where both parents employ their Sabbath leisure in giving more than ordinary time to endearing intercourse with their children, their first idea of the day will be akin to that of one very little boy, who always spoke of it as "his loving-day!"

There is a truly evangelical sense, in which—

> "He prayeth best who loveth best
> All things both great and small."

Some who now look back over the training of children as a thing past, could tell that conscience traces many of their failures to an adherence

rather to the *letter* than the spirit of the day; being obliged, on calm reflection to admit, that they were sometimes in reality zealous for their own way, when they fancied that their zeal was "for the Lord;" and that if they had their work to do over again, they would aim at doing it more in accordance with "the mind that was in Christ." To younger mothers, they say, with all humility, "Cultivate early and assiduously the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith."

But the most truly Christ-like mother of a young family has hindrances and difficulties best known to herself. Supposing her to have, on week days, all the help that can be derived from servants; her wish to allow *them* their share of Sabbath privileges, may leave her on that day with, perhaps, a babe at her breast and a little prattler at her knee, besides the larger group who depend on her for the profitable employment of their time—her own strength and spirits are overstrained—while, with the best previous arrangements, some hitch or provoking mistake may interrupt the comfort and the harmony she so earnestly desires for her husband and for all the household; what wonder if she finds it

difficult not to seem *worried*, when she would rather be difiusing around her the calm unclouded sunshine of genial loving kindness. Two practical suggestions may be offered to such as are passing through the experiences described.

1st.—Abstain on the Lord's day, as far as it is consistent with duty, from all *fault finding*. If the offender be a servant, probably the greater good will result from some judicious directions, or different regulations being made before the return of the day. Rather endeavour not to *see* every fault at the moment, than surrender your own peace, or give the least ground for a remark once made by a servant (of a conscientious mistress too), that "Mistress was harder to please on Sunday than any other day."

2nd.—Do not expect too much of those under your care, or give way to discouragement because you cannot reproduce all the pleasant pictures of domestic Sabbath scenes that you have seen or heard of. Such descriptions are not fictitious, the originals are to be found. But great allowance must be made for diversities of talent and of temperament, both in the mother and the children. A mother, now living, once remarked in a Maternal Meeting, where some

one was speaking of the class of difficu alluded to, that "she had ten children, and had never had any trouble with any of th No response was made to her remark; perhaps, not another mother present could l made it in a sense so unqualified. But t were those present who could have testified very troublesome children have grown useful men and women; bearing fruits righteousness from seeds early sown, amids the difficulties supposed—seed that seeme the time to be utterly lost. The restless acti of robust health is no sign of a perverse o irreverent spirit. The quick memory and mental precocity, that soon tire of the s pictures and stories, are *precious talents*, w will repay the most careful cultivation, only them *be* wisely cultivated!

Let parents procure, if they feel that they not supply them, such materials for thought development, as minds of this class increasi require, that no bright intellect may be lef connect the idea of listless inactivity with S day lessons, nor to fancy that the interes religious truth is far inferior to that of scien or classical studies.

But these last few lines seem to have car

us far beyond the immediate circle of the nursing mother's cares. You, dear friend, are aiming to do that for which Abraham was commended—to command your children and your household after you, to keep God's law; nay, more, you are travailing in birth again till it be found in every one of your little children; and you would like to see the glistening eye, to hear the simple response of loving interest from each of them. Well, be assured of the Saviour's presence and His tender sympathy, with *yourself* and with *your little ones.* "His yoke is easy and His burden light." He will never impute it as a fault, that you cannot do all that you would, nor that you find it impossible to give to every child the amount of attention that might be desirable to keep him good and happy, on this or any day of the week, if by circumstances he is deprived of his ordinary exercise in the open air. Your little ones are probably not very different from those whom He took in His arms, laid His hands upon and blessed, and most assuredly, He is in no way different now from what He was then. "He breaketh not the bruised reed, nor quencheth the smoking flax," and assuredly *you shall not lose your reward.*

XVII.

HOW MAY PARENTS ACQUIRE THE CONFIDENCE OF THEIR CHILDREN, AND CULTIVATE MORAL COURAGE IN OPPOSITION TO FEAR?

Children are naturally confiding. One way of maintaining this confidence is, to reciprocate it and not to betray it. Want of sympathy and reserve on the part of relatives will inevitably check it. Sharpness of manner, ridicule, and versatility of conduct, are serious hindrances to freedom. Parents should listen patiently to children's difficulties and excuses, and be always willing to acknowledge their own mistakes. They should take the opportunity of drawing out the opinions and feelings of the young when they are inclined to talk, and not press them unduly when any reluctance is manifested. Another thing to be avoided is, hasty condemnation of what was frivolous or unwise, just at the moment it is confessed; it will usually be found much better to remark upon it afterwards. In relation to ordinary fear, we should carefully ascertain its cause. It may arise from peculiar irritability of the nervous system; from injudicious treatment;

from surprise in sleep; from foolish stories; from a very lively imagination; from want of better information; from seeing the alarm of others; from a guilty conscience. This fear is very different from that awe and reverence which is produced by sublime and striking scenes or descriptions. We should labor to instil the love and the fear of God, as the best preservative against the undue fear of man or of any natural evils. Children should be encouraged freely to explain their apprehensions; and whenever it is possible to relieve them, it should be done kindly and at once. *Moral* courage is especially to be cultivated as essential to a truly noble character. Without this, we cannot take up and act out the Christian profession in the world. Children should be induced to confess their faults, to mention any accident they have had; and such confessions, if voluntary, should be tenderly received, and be set against whatever penalty is incurred. Parents should aim to infuse a spirit of resolution and fortitude into their children's minds by their example, their conversation, and their course of education; avoiding most studiously whatever would cherish a morbid sensibility or tempt to concealment. Parents, when inculcating principles, should enforce them by examples drawn from Scripture, from general

history, or common life. It may be useful sometimes, in order to strengthen the principle of moral and physical courage, to entrust a younger child to the care of an older one, or to engage them in some enterprise which demands resolution and self-control.

XVIII.

HOW SHOULD FEMALE EDUCATION BE CONDUCTED SO AS NOT TO PROVE INJURIOUS TO HEALTH?

The Spartans used to give particular attention to the health of their daughters, and decided that in order to this, the health of the mother must have the first attention. See "The Mother's Book," by a Physician. A mother in an unfavorable state of health, is liable to despondency and irritability. The sickliness of our females has become almost a national reproach; it is such a rare thing to find a woman in the enjoyment of sound health. This may often be traced to improper treatment in childhood, and the regard given to fashion in dress and amusement, to the neglect of more important considerations. Diet

should be light and simple, and meals regular; as much as possible avoiding stimulants. One great reason why our sons grow up hardy and active, whilst our daughters are pale, sickly, and languid, is, that in early life boys are allowed more liberty in the open air. Their rough exciting sports exhilarate the spirits, circulate the blood, expand the chest, and impart strength and agility to their limbs; whilst their loose and simple dress affords no obstruction to the freedom of their movements. Girls are forbidden to romp or climb, and are reproved if they soil or disarrange their dress; called in from the grass because of the dew, and from the sun lest they should be tanned; their liberty is perpetually curtailed, and the result is, that they settle down to the confinement of the nursery or the school-room, and become indifferent to that physical exercise which they ought to have. Let them have plenty of recreation out of doors whenever the weather permits, and receive as much instruction as possible from the objects around them, in the garden, on the coast, and in the fields. Early hours, daily washing of the body with cold or tepid water, and frequent change of under garments are essential to health and comfort. Active exercise increases perspiration, and if this is allowed to close up the pores, eruptions

are produced. The dress should offer no impediment to the full play of the lungs and the movement of the limbs. It should be loose about the waist, and be suspended from the shoulders. In the winter the neck and arms should be covered, and no such changes be made as to produce a sudden chill. Great care should be taken to prevent cold or damp feet, or to have shoes that do not fit. It is desirable in our climate to wear flannel next the skin in winter, and to substitute cotton for linen. Much harm arises from stooping over the desk or the frame for any length of time; indeed, it is desirable not to preserve any position so as to become weary of it.

We would advise mothers to have as little recourse as possible to medicine, and when it is administered, to let it be of the simplest character, carefully avoiding all mercurial preparations. Should there be any thing requiring much judgment, it is far wiser and better to call in a competent physician or apothecary, than to trust to their own limited experience. Early hours, well-ventilated bed-rooms, and separate bedsteads, are very conducive to health.

XIX.

CONSIDERATIONS TO BE BORNE IN MIND BY MOTHERS IN THE INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING OF THEIR CHILDREN.

1st.—That the state in which they are born is a state of sin. 2ndly.—That the object of a religious education, is to counteract the designs of Satan. 3rdly.—That this is beyond mere human power and can only be accomplished by the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. 4thly.—That we are not therefore to despond, but to rely on God in the exercise of believing prayer, that our labour shall not be in vain.

Four means are to be employed—instruction, exhortation, prayer, and training. These means are to be combined.

As it relates to *instruction*, let it be felt that the doctrines of the Bible are better gathered from the Bible itself, than from any other book; giving them always a practical bearing, and keeping particularly in view the doctrine of the atonement. The second means is *exhortation;* by this we mean, that it is of small avail to address ourselves only to the *understanding* of children, but we must try to influence their *affections.*

The proof of genuine religion must be shewn by self-denying, practical obedience. The Scripture illustrations to this effect are abundant and very conclusive. In reference to *prayer*, we recommend mothers to pray *with*, as well as *for* their children. Their prayers should be clear, earnest, and brief. Supplication should be made especially for the converting and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. If prayer is to follow the reading of the Scriptures, it is well to let our petitions accord with the subject which has been just presented to our minds. By *training* we understand the formation of moral habits, and this is to be accomplished by discipline and *example*.

Additional Thoughts on the Subjects named in Chapter XIX.

The importance of these subjects, and their close relation to each other, may justify a somewhat extended consideration of them, particularly in connexion with the remark, that "the doctrines of the Bible are better gathered from the Bible itself than from any other book."

Referring in the first place to the second of those two papers, we may find it useful, as we

often have done in our meetings, to go back upon our own experience. With "the aged women" among us, this experience is twofold—embracing recollections of instruction received in their own childhood, and its effect on themselves; together with the manner in which, when they became mothers, they endeavoured, in their turn, to teach their children. Without attempting any further or more definite answer to the question as to "occasional want of success," it may not be unimportant to own a conviction arising out of the retrospection suggested, that the work was *sometimes begun at the wrong end.* The bright, the loving, the attractive, especially as exhibited in the personal history of Jesus, were not omitted, but they did not stand out so prominently as the teaching of natural depravity and the absolute necessity of spiritual regeneration. Such memories have, in maturer years, led to "great searchings of heart," and to questionings like the following—questionings, be it remembered, in minds holding as sacredly, and maintaining as inflexibly as they ever did, the doctrines just indicated.

Is it not possible so to teach and apply these, as to discourage a child in cultivating "whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely;" and not only practicable in childhood, but at that age

most favourably developed into life-long tempers and habits?

Has there not been sometimes a stern solemnity unconsciously attending the undue precedence referred to, leaving an impression rather of *displeasure* than of *love;* a conviction in the child that it was an utter alien from Christian privilege and fellowship, rather than an object of tender solicitude, of cheerful hope, and of winning influence?

Were taste and capacity always sufficiently studied, and was abstract instruction sufficiently varied by referring to Divine wisdom and goodness, the beauty of the flowers which the child delighted to gather—the garniture of woods and fields, where his choicest recreations were enjoyed—or the provisions of the table which, with healthy relish, he felt to be "very good?"

Such inquiries are not purely hypothetical; they partly arise from actual knowledge of feelings cherished by some who, now in years of maturity, are still among the lamentable examples of occasional want of success in the most conscientious, best-intentioned religious training.

Blessed be our faithful God, these examples *are* occasional only. We can hardly glance at a christian family without meeting with the

most refreshing evidence, that though grace is not of blood, nor "of the will of the flesh," yet in the same family, one generation does declare God's wonderful works of redemption to another; living witnesses to the truth of promises specially made to the "seed of the righteous." And all around us there are homes which are truly nurseries for the church, continually replenishing its numbers, and that not seldom, with young and warm-hearted disciples, who cannot remember a time when the name of Jesus was not precious to them, and exercises of worship delightful; "having from childhood known the Holy Scriptures," trained to habitual reading of the Bible (the Old Testament with the New), as is naturally done with any other book, from the beginning to the end—fascinated with the narratives; coming to the doctrines, not in formal creed or catalogue, but interspersed and incorporated just as they found them; early led by the Holy Spirit lovingly to "do the will of God" so far as they knew it, there is every reason to hope that with enlarging capacity and deepening experience of their own hearts, they will with increasing assurance, "know of the doctrine, whether it is of God," and so, in the midst of plausible errors, will "continue in the things that

they have learned." John vii. 17; 2 Tim. iii. 14—17.

But if less pleasing perhaps, yet more conclusive, are the instances of those who, though instructed with equal care, did not until childhood and youth also had passed away, feel any interest in doctrinal truth, and then only by the awakening of their minds to *earnest inquiry after personal salvation.* The eminent bookseller of Berlin was not solitary in being able to testify—"Christianity never was forced upon me; it was I that was forced upon Christianity." The internal evidence of evangelical truth presents itself with tenfold greater force to the soul eagerly asking "What shall I do to be saved?" than to one who never felt what it was to be without Christ, having no hope. Can any recollection be more thrilling than that of the time when the Scriptures began to be searched and read with *self-application;* when, as John Bunyan expressed it, "The Apostolic writings, in which formerly I could see no beauty, became unspeakably delightful?" Doctrines, the very mention of which had been wearisome, assumed intense interest, as shedding light on our own relations to God and to eternity. That of human depravity, for instance, *accepted and felt*

as describing *our own* state; linked as it was with the glorious truth, that Christ came to call not "the righteous, but sinners to repentance." That other great doctrine of regeneration, that had been barely tolerated as the driest of all themes, was now regarded with such a deep sense of its necessity, that the only doubt was, whether our regeneration was a thing possible; the heartfelt cry,

> "And can such natures be restored,
> Such rebels reconciled?
> Can grace itself the means afford,
> To make a foe a child?"

And the only satisfying answer, that Divine power was pledged to accomplish the "new creation." Oh! there is no theology, no orthodoxy, equal to that which is acquired by a poor trembling sinner under the shadow of the cross, intreating and longing to know the *power* of truths which he had never doubted, and had yet never received into his heart. That old and oft-exploded objection, that "the doctrines of grace are unfavourable to morality," is in the present day modernised into the assertion, that it is selfish to be under deep concern as to personal salvation. What opposing argument can be so

convincing as the unmistakeable consciousness—"I never had one true desire after holiness, never began the endeavour to control temper or to practise unselfishness, till I saw and felt the love of God in the astonishing fact, that He 'laid upon Christ the iniquity of us all.'"

In the case here sketched there is nothing remarkable. The great object in introducing it is to state that the only guiding star through all the struggle—perhaps it may be said, the fundamental basis of the whole process—was the conviction, early and deeply fastened on the conscience, that the *Bible was the supreme authority;* that peace and holiness were to be secured, not by singling out or dividing one portion of it from another; still less by explaining away and bringing its doctrines down to an agreement with cherished opinions or one-sided predilections; but by cordially embracing *the whole,* "casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself" to the contrary, "receiving Christ Jesus the Lord" in all His offices and in every part of His Divine work. How precious then become the promised operations of the Holy Spirit, in convincing, teaching, and revealing; and let us add, how *deep-felt the debt of gratitude to those faithful parents* who, by patient perse-

verance, had succeeded in imparting a thorough acquaintance with the Bible—the Bible in its entireness, its connection, and its harmony. What wealth of treasure was now discovered in it; what Divine knowledge of every secret of the heart! What all-sufficient answers to every doubt and fear! This paper cannot be better closed than by the following quotation from a recent number of one of the most influential journals of the day, merely premising that the two words, "domestic teaching" are substituted for two in the original, referring to teaching of a more public kind:—

"Certain we are, that neglect of the Bible is one of the great sins of the religion of the day, and the fruitful source of that absence of consistency, high-toned principle, and spiritual life, which we are often called to deplore. The most effectual means of remedying this evil, would be such a style of domestic teaching as should not only communicate much biblical instruction, but should also, by giving a view of the rich treasures contained in God's Word, quicken the desire of the hearers to search the Scriptures for themselves."

XX.

HOW MAY WE ACCOUNT FOR OCCASIONAL WANT OF SUCCESS IN THE RELIGIOUS TRAINING OF CHILDREN?

This want of success may arise from unscriptural ideas on the subject, in the minds of parents.

2nd.—From an imperfect sense of their own solemn responsibility.

3rd.—From want of a better understanding of the nature and characters of children.

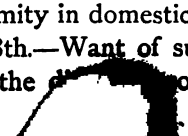
4th.—From a neglect on the part of mothers to qualify themselves for their duty.

5th.—From a disposition and endeavour to devolve the work chiefly on others.

6th.—Parents are apt to satisfy themselves with giving their children a certain measure of religious information, without aiming at the same time to influence the affections and awaken the conscience.

7th.—Failure may sometimes result from neglect of self-government, and want of uniformity in domestic government.

8th.—Want of success may be owing, in part, to the [illegible]ome parents feel in having to



correct their children for faults which they are themselves prone to commit.

9th.—Parents may fail from the absence of a watchful and prayerful spirit. And, lastly, from a disposition to indulge children unduly in their desire for worldly amusements and society.

10th.—The habit of allowing or indulging remarks on professed fellow Christians, imputing wrong motives to them, ridiculing their dress, habits, &c. This, before children, is likely to be exceedingly hurtful, and should, under *any* circumstances, be avoided.

XXI.

THE USE OF SCRIPTURE IN FAMILY GOVERNMENT, AND ITS INFLUENCE IN SUSTAINING PARENTAL AUTHORITY.

The excellent J. Clayton, who had three sons in the ministry, states, that from the first he had established the Bible as a magistrate in his house, and appealed to it on all occasions. On one occasion, when a child had done wrong, he called him into his study, and told him he believed, according to God's word, that he ought to punish him; but he wished him first to read

for himself what the Bible said. The child read the various passages pointed out, and on being asked what he thought, he said, "Yes, father, I see you must punish me." This produced such an effect, that the same offence was never repeated. Madame de Saussure, in her work on "Progressive Education," recommends the Scriptures as the source of religious instruction, in preference to any human composition. The Bible Catechism may, however, be resorted to in reference to particular sins. It is a good plan to have a few family proverbs often repeated, as occasions offer themselves; such as, "The way of transgressors is hard." "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves to the elder." "He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely." &c. In settling disputes, it should be the practice to enquire what the Scriptures recommend: this must settle the point. If a child has been untruthful or dishonest, search out those passages which relate to these offences, and advise the child to commit them to memory. Should a child be covetous, let him hear or read the history of Achan, Gehazi, and Lot; if passionate, the account of Cain; if deceitful, the case of Jacob; if untrue, the sad history of Ananias and Sapphira.

We must, however, guard against the too frequent and familiar use of Scripture; especially the habit of quoting it under the influence of passion or vexation, or of appealing to Divine authority on matters when our own watchfulness or firmness in enforcing good habits ought to be quite sufficient.

The different tempers of children must be carefully studied. Some require to dwell on the requirements of God's law, others need to dwell more on His love. As Mrs. Fry, in her "Principles of Education," has well said, "We should bring our children up on Mount Calvary, rather than under Mount Sinai." A child may, however, be brought to see that God's anger is not like the passionate displeasure we are acquainted with, but that it is needful for Him to punish sin. Some passages in the minor prophets shew the Divine reluctance to deal with transgressors. Such as "How shall I give thee up?" &c. A passage of Scripture for daily repetition, will furnish a store in the mind that may serve as an antidote in the hour of temptation. "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee." The Rev. Samuel Martin's "Good-night texts," are very suitable for this purpose.

XXII.

THE RELIGION OF THE FAMILY.

Several passages of Scripture may be referred to, bearing on this important subject; and shewing it to be the duty of parents to walk before their households "with a perfect heart." Abraham was commended of God as an example of domestic piety; David was said to return that he might bless his household; Job, when the days of their feasting were over, sent and sanctified his sons and daughters, offering sacrifices for them under the fear that they might have sinned.

The family constitution is peculiarly adapted to carry on the purposes of God in the world, where we have to mix with superiors, equals, and inferiors; in the family, those graces are called into exercise that shall fit them for their duties on this wider scale; having been trained to submit to the authority of their parents, to exercise affection to brothers and sisters, and condescension and kindness to servants.

The terms, king and priest, apply with peculiar significance to the Christian parent. In the family circle, the father reigns as a king, in sovereign and undisputed authority. There, too, as a priest, he is to officiate on behalf of others; and in so doing, compassion and sympathy are greatly promoted, since it is impossible for a man to pray often for his family without feeling increasing tenderness towards them. In such a family, the child learns to be a good subject. Family order is of great importance. Let each know and preserve his proper place, and be often reminded of his serious responsibility. To keep children in order, we must exercise self-respect. Timidity, fear of man, or want of observation on our part, may encourage insubordination. Family worship, punctually and properly conducted, has a most beneficial influence, often restoring peace, and dispersing those clouds which are apt to gather; but it should be rendered interesting, and not suffered to degenerate into a mere form. Special seasons should be noticed, and, as circumstances permit, children and friends should be encouraged to take part in it, by reading in succession, repeating Scripture, singing together, &c.

XXIII.

THE BEHAVIOUR OF CHILDREN TOWARDS EACH OTHER.

The Saviour's golden rule should often be repeated, so as to be stamped on the memory of a child. To shew the evils of envy, jealousy, and quarrelling among children, the history of Joseph and his brethren may be referred to, and the story of the friendship between Jonathan and David as a specimen of the feelings brothers and sisters should exercise towards each other. Elder children should be trained to protect the younger. The character and conduct of our Saviour should be frequently contemplated and brought before our children. His compassion, tenderness, and patience; His self-denial and constant regard to the wants and feelings of others. Keeping young children employed, helps to promote good humor. Reading, drawing, and mechanical operations, are very serviceable to engage attention and prevent disputes. A story will sometimes turn the current of feeling, and restore cheerfulness and peace. Abbott's little book, "Rollo at Work," is very suggestive. Reading a good tale aloud, sometimes checks peevishness

and prevents altercation. It has been tried, to keep five minutes' silence and then communicate the thoughts to each other. Netting, plaiting, &c., are useful occupations for boys. When quarrels arise, the source whence they spring should be pointed out. See Babington, on Christian Education, eighth chapter. Games of competition are often productive of envy and hatred, and sometimes lead to evasion and deceit. Control over the appetite should be inculcated; and if children are rewarded, it should be so as not to stimulate vanity, selfishness, or covetousness. Thoroughly to establish the principles of strict justice among children is essential, if we would promote a kind and happy feeling between them.

In James's "Family Monitor," there is an excellent chapter on the fraternal duties. Mothers should be so far acquainted with the laws of our physical system, as to be able, without much difficulty, to know when the child's temper is affected by disease, so as to make due allowance for occasional disturbances and avoid unnecessary reproof.

It may be useful, when disputes have arisen and the feelings have been subdued, to take a quiet opportunity of recalling the whole matter and going patiently through it, so as to elicit

an acknowledgment on either side of what has been wrong, and to shew how the offender might have done better.

XXIV.

THE DESIGN OF MOTHERS' MEETINGS.

One object, assuredly, is, that Mothers, in thus associating together, may have a stronger sense of their responsibility, that they may realize more fully the real state of their children, and may exhibit before them more of the spirit of that piety they wish their children to love. The mother's duties are peculiar and of a very sacred character. She has entrusted to her, in a great degree, the formation of her children's minds. She can little imagine what her influence may be, and how far it will extend. The authority of a father will one day cease; but the recollection of a mother's love follows the man through all the chequered scenes of life, even to its close. Another object of Maternal Meetings is, to obtain a more lively sense of the real condition of our children as sinful creatures, and needing to be renewed in the spirit of their minds. As the child is with

the mother every day, and she sees much that is amiable in it, she needs to be often reminded of its perishing condition, even while she is thinking of the danger of the heathen abroad and the ignorant around her.

From some passing event, she may occasionally be roused to speak to her child seriously and tenderly of his state by nature and practice; but then she appears to forget it. Now, by these meetings, a more abiding sense of the true state of things is impressed on the mind. Another good effect is, to encourage a spirit of prayer and watchfulness over the temper and the life. It is known to all, how absolutely necessary consistent conduct is to produce and cherish right impressions; even our looks before children are influential. A still further design is, to encourage mothers, amidst many discouragements, to go forward in the discharge of their maternal duties. These discouragements are numerous, arising from early negligence, from different temperaments, from unfavorable circumstances, and various other causes. It is, therefore, very helpful to compare our experience with that of other mothers, to know how they have succeeded or failed in similar circumstances, and to obtain their sympathy and counsel.

XXV.

ON THE COURTESY AND RESPECT DUE TO THE AGED.

This respect is enforced by the Bible. Lev. xix. 32. Job xxxii. 4, 6.

If it is a proof of a good education to respect antiquity, and to venerate the structures which have withstood the ravages of time, how can we regard with coldness and indifference the living remnants of a former age, through whose experience we may become wiser and better? The tribute of reverence which is their due, adds as much honor to those who pay it as to those who receive it. The sympathy of a kind heart will prompt to this attention. The aged have usually gone through many trials; they stand comparatively alone. Infirmities thicken upon their course, and they are contemplating a great change. Reverence for age, being a Divine command, should be early inculcated and impressed on children by the example of their parents. Mothers should begin with their little ones, teaching them to offer a chair or a stool to elderly persons, when they come in their way; to

be ever ready to assist them; not to interrupt them in conversation, but to accept their advice, and give attention to their opinions.

We often see disrespect to parents and aged relatives visited with marks of Divine displeasure. Deficiency in this duty is too common in the present day. There is a disposition to throw off the reins, and to treat parents and superiors with neglect, or else with that familiarity which leads to it. The hoary head, when crowned with piety, is an order of nobility established by God Himself. Even the heathens have left us striking examples of respect for the aged. The Spartans were remarkable for it, and the wandering tribes in North America shewed the deepest respect to years. If as a people we suffer declension in this particular, *heads* of families are chiefly accountable for it. Many instances may be given, of a truly satisfactory character, where children have treated their parents and grandparents with becoming reverence and affection, so as to cheer and sustain those who were passing through the vale of years; and secure, by their influence and example, similar benefits for themselves in like circumstances.

XXVI.

THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE ADAPTED TO THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE MIND.

The Author of our being best knows what the human mind requires, and has made it the duty of parents to keep His word in their hearts, so as to make it the matter of their daily conversation with their children. The origin of our existence and the great work of creation are subjects well adapted to awaken wonder, reverence, and admiration. There is no book in which children can be so readily and deeply interested as the Bible. It deals in facts which come home to the heart, and waken the sympathies of the soul. If man is represented as sinful, erring, and weak, this truth is evident to the consciousness of the child. If the punishment of sin is spoken of, with this the child is familiar; as, also, when we are told of death, of a world of woe or bliss beyond the grave. There is no story so telling as the life of Jesus, no interest equal to that which attaches to His cross. The Bible is remarkable for its variety—combining so much pathetic narrative and sublime thought in a garb of such sweet simplicity. If it had been

composed for children, it could not have been more suitable. It was prepared for all ages and classes of men, in all ages and conditions of the world. It is *the* Book, which should have a child's earliest attention. It will tax the mind sufficiently but not oppressively. It will lead to enquiry and discrimination. "It will give the most profitable direction to thought, furnish a balance wheel to the mind, a mould for the character, and help to cultivate the affections." It will provide an antidote to the pride of mere knowledge, and supply the highest motives to effort.

Dr. Campbell has remarked, that one reason why there are so few converts from the Mahometan faith is, because they are so early and thoroughly grounded in the Koran, and have no other book.

One of the evils of the present day is, the increase of light and often prejudicial literature, which diverts the mind from a serious study of the Scriptures. The best way to counteract this evil, is to read much with children, and to furnish them with books that are at once interesting and useful. An acquaintance with the characters of writers will assist us to form a right estimate of their works, seeing what their lives and aims have been.

Sir Walter Scott was accompanied to the continent by a pious servant. She remarked, that it was supposed his mind was enfeebled towards the closing scene; but she said, it was only regret that his talents had not been devoted to a nobler end. Lord Byron's days ended painfully; furnishing a striking contrast with the experience of many good men, whose great object it has been to advance the cause of Christ by their writings.

XXVII.

WHAT REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS ARE TO BE PREFERRED?

The word of God and His dealings with His people, should be the rule of parental discipline. The whole world is, indeed, as a school in which men are training for their eternal manhood. Some writers are altogether opposed to rewards, on the ground that no merit is attached to our best performances. Such, indeed, is the Divine estimate; and yet, in the government of God we see a system of rewards and punishments; and there is no command, or precept, or exhortation in Scripture which is not accompanied by a promise

or a threat. Rewards should have more reference to conduct than to mere talent; nor do rewards necessarily imply gifts. To be allowed to relieve some case of distress, to assist in some interesting pursuit, to take a ride into the city or the country, or to entertain a favorite companion, will answer the purpose quite as well. Those rewards should be avoided which stimulate evil passions, pride, conceit, or self-importance. Mrs. Fry, in her Principles of Education, says, "Our heavenly Father never proposes anything as a reward or punishment, that is not righteously and justly an object of desire or fear. He never proposes, as an incentive to obedience, that on which at another time He teaches us to set no value, neither does He present to our fears that of which it is unworthy of an immortal being to be afraid."

Our rewards must be something that, with consideration of the age and circumstances of our children, may be reasonably desired; and our punishments something that may be properly feared. They should be as nearly as possible like the chastisements which God inflicts upon His own people, *preventive* and *remedial* rather than judicial; and it should be made apparent to the child, that the punishment inflicted, has more reference to the future than to the past, and is

disobedient child is usually fretful and dissatisfied. The want of judicious control exposes children to many temptations, and fosters selfishness.

Another habit, involving much comfort in a family, is *Order*. It is very desirable to have a set time for various occupations—for rising, going to bed, meals, lessons, play, &c. *Neatness* and *Cleanliness* should be early taught and enforced, especially in the training of little girls. They should be accustomed to look after their own concerns — putting away toys, clothes, books, &c. *Regularity* in respect to trifling obligations should be enforced, such as returning what has been borrowed. *Economy* and *Moderation* should be cultivated, especially with reference to dress, ornaments, sweets, &c.

Self-control is most important, particularly in the government of the tongue. Parents are too apt to excuse many remarks made by children on the appearance, character, and conduct of others, if accompanied with smartness and wit. *Habits of mutual consideration* amongst children should be very carefully studied and encouraged. Another important habit is, steady *Application* to whatever they are doing. Children are often deficient in this, and the consequences attend

them through life. Whatever is given them to do should be well done.

Care should be taken not to weary a child by exacting too much, especially if a task is taken up reluctantly, or under difficulties.

Habits of *Integrity* in ACTION, as well as in *word*, are of extreme importance. A child who is suffered to cheat in a game of marbles, or in any other way, will be an easy prey to more powerful temptations.

XXIX.

THE CHIEF HINDRANCES TO FAMILY PIETY.

Separation of parents and children for education.

The careless and unprofitable manner in which family worship is too often conducted, frequently in the absence of one or more members of the household.

Frivolous conversation at meals and at other times.

Reserve on religious subjects.

Worldly conformity in dress, company, and manners.

Light reading.

Inattention to the training of servants, especially to those who are with the children of the family.

Late hours.

Want of punctuality.

Unguarded remarks on ministers and religious persons. This involves inconsistency, most especially detrimental to young and keen observers.

Careless and irreverent use of Scripture.

XXX.

PROPER GOVERNMENT OF CHILDREN, AND THE MANAGEMENT OF VARIOUS TEMPERS.

The treatment of our heavenly Father to His children should be a guide to Parents in their training and discipline.

Immediate fulfilment of the thing required is not always to be insisted upon, but punishment should follow on any thing like obstinate disobedience.

Children who are subject to passion should be treated quietly, and not be compelled, under violent excitement, to confess their faults, or be dealt with severely; but should be left alone

till they are in a calmer state of mind, and be then reproved according to their offence.

Fretfulness or peevishness of disposition often arises from want of employment, or from physical causes; sometimes from inconsideration on the part of the parent, or her neglecting to fulfil a promise hastily given and forgotten.

Quarrelsomeness may often be corrected by joining with children in their play, or else by separating them.

Falsehood and deceit should be treated with much seriousness, as offences committed chiefly against God. Instances of the kind recorded in Scripture should be read and dwelt upon.

XXXI.

TO WHAT CAUSES MAY WE ASCRIBE THE DEFICIENCY OF RESPECT SO OFTEN MANIFESTED BY CHILDREN TOWARDS THEIR PARENTS AS THEY ARE GROWING UP, AND ESPECIALLY TOWARDS THEIR MOTHERS?

To *over indulgence and a want of uniform discipline.*

To a sense of *their own superiority* in regard

to learning and accomplishments, whereas children should feel that greater advantages ought to promote their *gratitude.*

Mothers should be especially careful to avoid indulging in *vain* and *trifling conversation* before children, such as may be called gossip.

It is a mistake for mothers to aim at *supporting their authority by appealing frequently to the father* before the children.

Partiality in a family creates serious evils, and leads to much disaffection.

One good writer says, "*Avoid over discipline,* for children are as easily injured by too much government as too little; they ought always to be watched with attention and tenderness, but should not be harassed."

It is of great importance to cultivate the habit of attention and respect amongst the members of a family towards each other. If this is disregarded in early life, it will be in vain to expect it afterwards.

Respect should be paid to children's feelings as they advance in years, not to reprove them before others who are younger than themselves.

Parents should not only aim at the best interests of their children, but seek to make them cheerful and happy by every lawful gratification.

By this means, a mother's presence is felt to be essential to the comfort of the circle.

Frequent absence from home, so as to leave children very much to themselves or to servants, has a prejudicial effect, and creates a feeling of independence in young people which it may be difficult afterwards to correct. Even Christian mothers may be tempted to neglect their own domestic duties and interests, from the earnest desire to be more extensively useful abroad.

XXXII.

WHAT SHOULD MOTHERS TEACH THEIR CHILDREN?

Many of those who read this enquiry will fall back upon the period of infancy and childhood, and remember the golden hours which were spent in the society of a beloved parent. They will recal the earliest instructions conveyed by conversation and books, and revive some of those pleasurable associations which accompanied them on their introduction to life. It is not our object, however, to occupy the attention with many particulars, but to take up the subject generally, leaving it to individual hearts and

minds to follow out the few suggestions we may be able to make.

The first thing that a mother has to teach her child, in the order of providence, is *to love God.* Even before the little one can comprehend her language, this is the great ennobling sentiment which should occupy her own mind. That she may be prepared to carry out this purpose of her heart, she must pray, and study, and regulate her whole course of conduct and conversation accordingly. She must strive to become better acquainted with the Divine character, with His wonderful *word*, and *works*, and *ways*. Especially must she live in daily communion with Him as a covenant God and Saviour, so that she may reflect His image, and instruct by her *example* even more than by her *lips*. A mother should be amongst her children as Christ was amongst His disciples, "full of grace and full of truth."

The next thing a mother should teach her child is, to love others as he loves himself; and here again precept is of little avail without example. Look at the state of society—its heart burnings, and evil speakings, the selfishness which is so common in all the circles of life, and ask, whether a young mind exposed to such influences, and having within a nature prone to

sin, is likely to imbibe the philanthropy of the gospel. If mothers would *cherish* benevolence, they must *exhibit* it. Talk not so much of kindness, but be kind, gentle, patient, forbearing, prepared to deny yourselves, to bear the burdens of others, to cover their offences with the mantle of charity, and to rejoice heartily in the happiness in which you cannot otherwise participate.

Another attachment which a mother should cultivate, is the love of Nature. This is inherent in most youthful minds, and only requires to be cherished and directed, that it may become a source of exquisite gratification. Accustom children to collect shells, leaves, flowers, &c., to arrange and imitate them. Let them have a garden, if possible; and be early acquainted with the natural history of animals as described in books, and as we may see them in the Zoological Gardens, &c. Accustom them to notice the changes in the weather, and the seasons; to distinguish sounds, such as the songs of birds, the lowing of the cattle, and the noises of the inferior creatures.

Besides this, a mother should very early teach a child to be useful—to help himself, and to endeavour to assist others. Children delight in using their powers, and cannot too soon be exercised in this way.

"Something to do" is the constant desire, and if children are not set to what is useful, they will very naturally become idle and mischievous. Connected with this is the duty of teaching them to be careful and orderly, to put away their playthings and books, to be clean in their little persons and habits, and punctual in whatever they have to do.

Much might be said as to the unspeakable value of inculcating truthfulness and uprightness in word and deed, of devotional habits, &c.; but as these topics are taken up separately, it is not needful to dwell upon them here.

XXXIII.

COMMON ERRORS INTO WHICH PARENTS ARE PRONE TO FALL.

1st. Not regarding the *supreme* claim of God upon ourselves and our offspring. They are *His* property, and only *lent* to us that we may train them for Him. This point must be fixed in the mind, then with Manoah and his wife we shall enquire of Him how the child is to be trained, and not be governed by our own vanity and selfishness.

2nd. Parents do not seek sufficiently that preparation for their important and arduous work which it requires.

To construct a building, to train a plant, to make a dress or a piece of furniture, we serve an apprenticeship; to train an immortal soul for God and for eternity, we are satisfied to pick up our knowledge as we can, and to rely upon the moment. A child is a complex being—body, soul, spirit. Great variety of treatment, too, is required. Who would trust the health of the body to an ignorant doctor, a selfish or careless nurse? What then shall we say to an ignorant and incompetent mother?

The 3rd error is, Relying too much on our own efforts, and not recognising, as we should do, the necessity of Divine influence for ourselves and our children. Our children are depraved—we must bring them to Jesus. This should be our first and unremitting concern. Without the love of God shed abroad in the heart, nothing can succeed. They may be learned, accomplished, honorable, and agreeable amongst men, but what of this, if they have not "Holiness to the Lord" inscribed upon them?

A 4th error is, Adopting too hastily the opinions of others, without carefully examining them by the word of God. How is this?

Because we are not sufficiently governed *ourselves* by one prevailing principle, and have not recurrence to the divine rule for our daily government. We do not think enough, meditate enough, and we do not follow out our convictions as we should, therefore our understandings are often darkened instead of being enlightened and free.

5th error. Relying too much on mere verbal instruction, and not looking enough to example and the education of circumstances.

6th. Devolving more on others than we should, and thereby trying to relieve ourselves of a duty which others cannot well perform.

7th. Want of agreement between parents, and allowing children to see this.

8th. Not attaching sufficient importance to the opening years of life—"*C'est le premier pas qui conte.*"

9th. Capriciousness and irregularity of treatment, or what may be called training by fits and starts. What should we think of a gardener who did this?

10th. Making children too prominent.

11th. Partiality, over-strictness, and over-indulgence. Love of ease and mere animal affection, often leads to spoiling children. We are to govern, not for our own pleasure, but for

a much higher and nobler end. The authority delegated to us is a sacred trust, for which we have to render a strict account.

12th. We are apt to forget that our children, like ourselves, are probationers, and must be trained accordingly to habits of self-denial. Our chief object, therefore, must be to lead them home to God as their heavenly Father; to give them a clear impression of His paternal character and interest in them. We should, in order to do this, aim more and more to catch and to reflect His gracious image upon our offspring. O, if every mother were thus a mirror to her little ones! If she were filled with the love of God, and expressed in her daily life "the mind that was in Christ," then, indeed, would our families become nurseries to the church, and the design of God in our earthly relationships be fully realized.

XXXIV.

WHAT AMUSEMENTS ARE SUITABLE FOR THE CHILDREN OF CHRISTIAN PARENTS?

It was the maxim of an ancient philosopher, that Nature abhors a vacuum. All Nature, in other words, is full of life, and delights to exercise

it. Hence one great reason for amusement in childhood. Such amusements should be selected as will develope the bodily and mental faculties; such as exercise the limbs and the senses, cultivate the affections, and recreate all the powers. If Nature is rudely thwarted, the temper is injured, and artificial methods must then be resorted to for relief. Children, with a little assistance, generally do much in the way of amusement for themselves and others. They are great imitators, and are naturally fond of self-help. Nothing delights them more than to find themselves useful.

Athletic sports are very desirable for boys. Girls, too, should have plenty of free exercise in the open air—running, jumping, swinging, and riding.

A taste for music and drawing, as children advance, should be cultivated, and many scientific entertainments may be resorted to; but the ball-room, the theatre, and the opera, are not consistent with Christian training. Games of chance should on no account be allowed. Children's parties require to be conducted with much care, or they may do considerable harm by fostering personal vanity and a taste for display, the introduction of stimulants, and an inclination to late hours. The less *selfish* amusements are,

the better If connected with something that will tend to the happiness of others as well as to the improvement and refreshment of the individual concerned, a twofold advantage will be gained.

XXXV.

How may habits of attention and industry be early and effectually formed?

At first, a child's attention is drawn to an object involuntarily, as to a light. Much patience is required in directing and fixing its attention. We must be careful not to divert attention too quickly, nor suffer it to be wearied. All children's first exercises should be pleasurable. We should not expect two things at once. Trains of thought are so rapid with adults, that teachers are apt to pass too quickly from one subject to another, taking it for granted that children can keep pace with them, and that they know much intuitively. The attention of children should be cultivated very much in accordance with their different tastes. One has a taste for figures, another for writing, another for drawing

or music. One will collect shells, another will arrange flowers. It does not so much matter in early life *how* the faculties are exercised, as to have them brought into healthful and vigorous operation. If a family is well conducted, children help to educate each other. Puzzles, dissected maps, bricks, and various juvenile games, such as are employed in the Kinden Garten system, may strengthen greatly the power of observation and attention. Some children are inattentive from listlessness, others from an over-busy imagination; so that they are often absent, living as it were in a world of their own. Encouragement should be given, as children advance, to form plans for individual and mutual improvement; so that they may take greater interest in the work of daily education, and feel that they are going hand in hand with their parents and teachers. The question, What have we done to day? may sometimes be put by a mother, surrounded by her family, with good effect. The idle will feel self-condemned, and the industrious will be encouraged. On such occasions, too, the opportunity will be given for suggesting suitable employment, and pointing out the need of diligence and perseverance, in order to fulfil the great purpose of our Creator. A similar enquiry may be made in the morning, as to what we are going to do; thus stimulating

the mind, and leading us on to a more distinct apprehension of our several duties. Facts and incidents illustrating the necessity for industry and its ultimate reward, such as we meet with in "Self Help" and other books, should be often recalled and dwelt upon.

XXXVI.

How far is it desirable for children to attend our great public meetings?

The question, as it is here given, presumes that it is advisable to a certain extent, according to the age and capacity of a child to understand and enter into the object presented to the attention of the audience.

As the minds of children are developed at such different ages, no rule can be laid down. The child should, at all events, be prepared for a meeting by having some idea of what he will hear there. Anecdotes related at public meetings often impress the mind and direct the thoughts to important subjects. It is desirable, too, that the young should have opportunities of seeing distinguished persons, remarkable either for

talent or piety. Their minds should be occupied with great objects. Let them know what labors are undertaken, and learn to anticipate and sympathize in their results. This will have an elevating and softening influence on the mind, and is the best preparative for the reception of religious truth. A gentleman in Ireland, whose little son was observed to take much interest in the conversation at table, was asked what methods he had adopted to excite this feeling. He replied, that from an early age he and his wife had been accustomed to call forth the benevolent feelings of their children, by representations of human suffering and the best methods of relieving it—such as a slave ship, a slave in chains, pictures of missionary operations, idols, charms, &c. Instruction on these subjects was often given at table, or walking abroad; and it was found to have a happy tendency to exclude little things from the mind, to prevent disputes, and to make the children feel their relation to the whole human family. By such means, selfish principles, which are at the root of all evil actions, may be counteracted. Late meetings are objectionable. Young people should be accompanied to such meetings as we have been noticing, by some one capable of helping them to make a right improvement of what they

hear, and of checking a tendency to levity or improper companionship.

Subsequent enquiries should be made, as to what information has been gained, and whether it can be turned to any practical account.

XXXVII.

WHAT ARE THE EVILS TO BE GUARDED AGAINST WHEN A YOUNG PERSON LEAVES SCHOOL AND HAS HER TIME AT HER OWN DISPOSAL?

There is a danger of relaxing authority so quickly that those who are growing up shall ultimately resist any control, and feel as if they had only to follow their own inclinations. It is of great importance for parents still to hold the reins, but to rule by love, and so as to inspire confidence. Mothers should enforce the necessity of regular and useful occupation. The studies which have been pursued at school should not be altogether relinquished, though benevolent and domestic occupations must have a share of daily attention. The value of time,

and their personal responsibility, should be frequently impressed on the minds of young people. Some of the best hours of each day should be given to solid reading, and not surrendered, as they too often are, to mere accomplishments or idle amusements. Domestic duties should have a prescribed time; for want of this they may be either slighted, or suffered to interrupt other engagements. It is quite unsuitable for mothers to be oppressed with household duties whilst their elder daughters are employed in fancy work, or in wasting time on some exciting tale. The instruction of others and attention to the younger members of a family may be reasonably looked for from grown-up sisters. It may, however, be better to *encourage* this rather than to *require* it. Whatever is undertaken voluntarily is usually done with more success.

Young people often suffer from mothers having neglected to cultivate their own minds sufficiently to be really intelligent companions. In order to win confidence and to preserve respect and sympathy, this is of great importance, and should on no account be neglected.

Mutual improvement societies for young ladies will be found in most cases highly advantageous, and should in every way be encouraged;

and lectures on scientific and other subjects should be frequented as opportunities arise.

Dangers will necessarily arise from intercourse with other young persons, especially amongst strangers and away from home.

Young people are apt to become restless and to hanker after change, unless home is made happy, and they have full and profitable employment. It is well to enlist their services in Schools, Bible and Tract Societies, Working-parties to assist the Poor, or to aid the cause of Missions, Asylums, &c.; only it will require great care that these engagements do not mislead them into the idea, that to be connected with religious operations is to be themselves religious. This, alas, is an easy and a fatal delusion! Late hours; extravagance in dress; inconsideration about servants; irregular attendance at the house of God; frequent absence from family worship, and unprofitable correspondence, are all evils which have to be *carefully* but *tenderly* guarded against, when the young have passed the period of childhood, and are still residing at home.

XXXVIII.

HOW ARE WE TO EVINCE AND REGULATE OUR ANXIETY FOR THE TEMPORAL WELFARE OF OUR CHILDREN?

When the law was about to be given on Mount Sinai, Moses was directed to "set bounds about the mount," to prevent the people from approaching too near to the place where the Divine glory was to be visibly displayed; he was to fix a *limit*, beyond which none might pass. And this may almost be said to symbolize the whole character of that dispensation. For almost every act of life, whether social or sacred, a *precise* rule was given, a *limit* was drawn. But not thus is duty defined for the disciples of Him who "was counted worthy of more glory than Moses." In the New Testament much is left to their spiritual discernment, their sense of honour, and of grateful love. No exact proportion of property is fixed to be given for the service of God or of the poor; the precept runs, "Every man, as he hath purposed in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." We are not to

forgive an offending brother seven times only, but to "be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us." So in the matter under our consideration now, we must look for our direction rather to the *spirit* than to the letter of any express command, though we do find a comprehensive summary in that great "commandment with promise," "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." It is quite obvious that this must condemn any *preference* given to temporal interests, especially if this be done by the *sacrifice* of that which is spiritual; or if it produce that excessive anxiety which hinders attention to any present duty, or interferes with that cheerful, patient disposition, which a mother should ever exemplify.

But in further considering the subject for practical purposes, it may greatly help us if we can lay down a few general principles for our guidance; remembering that while we are not to be over-anxious about those temporal things which our "Father has kept in His own power," we can scarcely err in earnestly desiring to understand and to discharge the trust which He has committed to ourselves—"The secret things belong unto the Lord; but the things which are

revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever."

Let us observe then, first—*That we are bound to direct and cultivate those faculties of body and mind which God bestows on our children.* We are to teach them that every talent and acquirement is a sacred trust, and to urge upon them the unselfish consideration, that whatever is so entrusted to *each*, is designed for the benefit of *all*. These great lessons should be the foundation of our training for secular employment; and will require to be gently, gradually, and continuously unfolded to them. But we should also accustom our own minds to regard every variety of talent given to our children as a trust committed to *us;* whether the special gift be physical energy and elasticity of animal spirits, mechanical skill, a love of the fine arts, or a taste for the exact sciences; for research into the laws and properties of Nature; or, whether it be a general thirst for knowledge, an aptitude for the study of languages, or a peculiar interest in history and the present condition of men in foreign lands.

All these varieties of talent *have* contributed largely to civilization and commerce, to the development and *discovery* of those treasures which the Great Creator has stored up in the

universe; to the encouragement of industry and to the relief of the poor; to acquaintance and brotherly sympathy with distant tribes of men, and the diffusion of the gospel among them. Literature, and science, and enterprising research, have all been made subservient to the circulation of the Scriptures in many languages, and even to their clearer interpretation in our own tongue, Therefore, in cultivating to the utmost of our means the tastes and capacities of our children, we may keep in view, not their own personal advancement merely, but the promotion of God's great and gracious purposes in the world at large.

2nd. As another general principle, we may remark, that while responsible *to our Maker* for such training of our children, *we are in a sense responsible to them also;* and when they shall become capable of forming a judgment as to *how* we discharged our trust, *any unreasonable neglect of their temporal interests, will lessen our influence over them in things of eternal moment.* This principle will apply to every branch of parental duty; but, confining it now to the subject especially before us, — the very possibility that they may not, at an early period of their lives, feel as we do the paramount importance of

eternal things, makes it the more desirable often to anticipate the test of our children's maturer judgment to our present course of proceeding as it regards their *temporal* welfare. This habit may be valuable in two ways—in *guarding us from exposing* them unduly to temptation or evil influence for the sake of some worldly advantage, and *in nerving us to do that* which we prayerfully and deliberately see to be right, though they may not as yet understand the principles on which we act.

To place them beyond the reach of *all* temptation is, of course, impossible; to do that, "We must needs go out of the world." But we can humbly seek to imitate Him, who does not suffer His children to be tempted "above that they are able to bear." We can surround them with every practicable safeguard and influence, counteractive of evil; we can carefully watch the effect on their character, of every association in which we place them; continually seeking that wisdom, so increasingly needed by a parent, as the young ones pass from the period of unquestioning submission to that of self-assertion and rising independence. This must indeed be the wisdom which cometh from above; so that while fully according our sympathy to the promptings of,

young and inexperienced minds, we do not fall into the sin of Eli; that of "honoring our children above God," by indulgence of their wishes against our own clear convictions, or in things forbidden by the circumstances in which His providence has placed them. But never, at least, let them have cause to say: "My disposition was not studied, my peculiar talent was neglected, my predilection for this or that department of useful labour was unreasonably thwarted."

3rd.—Let us notice, that while *all temporal good is of God's bestowment,* it is also His own pleasure, that the possession of such good should generally be *the recompence of honest labour in one form or another.* This is so obvious, as to require, perhaps, little consideration; only it may be used as an incitement to industry, to habits of attention and punctuality, and to the all-important practice of doing *well* whatever is to be done. Besides, this view of the subject opens to intelligent young minds, a field of most interesting and improving study; as, for example, the Divine mercy and wisdom in turning the curse into a blessing; the peculiar sweetness of blessings won by persevering toil; the vast variety of useful employments, combining division of labour with mutual dependence; how

the drudgery of the meanest member of a community is as necessary to the well-being of the whole, as the wealth of the richest, or the skill of the most ingenious. These topics, thus barely suggested, admit of a thousand familiar illustrations, supplying material for cheerful and profitable conversation around the family table or the evening fire. Such views of the matter may also tend to counteract a merely worldly spirit; to ennoble the commonest tasks; as well as to inspire a proper feeling of respect for every fellow-creature, who in the humblest department is honestly striving to "eat bread in the sweat of his brow." While faithfully warning our children, that uncertainty attends all temporal things; that prosperity affords no surer test of Divine approval than losses and disappointments do of Divine displeasure, let us seek to impress on them, with all evangelical modifications, the general rule, that "God helps those who help themselves."

4th.—We may assert that a certain degree of competence is *favourable to morality; to self-respect; to development of the affections; to freedom of action in the course of religion and charity.* Therefore, while ever trying to cherish a due estimate of things temporal, as uncertain and transitory, not worthy to be compared with

those that are eternal, we may yet use every proper effort to secure for our children a competence in the present life, as *one help* to their attainment of the life that is everlasting. Energies allowed to run to waste; indolent, listless habits; the temptations and embarassments of means, that are insufficient to "provide for honest things;" none of these can be favorable to an earnest study of Divine truth, or an unreserved surrender of the heart to its claims. And in regard to the great enterprizes of Christian benevolence, while they all require the use of money, we also know how it conduces to usefulness in either man or woman, to be possessed of what we call *business habits;* as, for example, order, method, exactness; the habit of calculating consequences, and taking comprehensive views of every pursuit or plan.

If these principles, then, are correct, do they not throw an atmosphere of sacredness around interests that are secular? May we not, in fact, apply to every lawful measure for securing to our children the means of temporal support, those apostolic words: "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving, *for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer?*" Yes, truly, "*the word of God and prayer;*" in the use of

these alone do we find the true *limit* of all temporal anxiety. Faith is always strengthened by exercise; and those who in seeking to do justice to their children's temporal interests, have had to do it by faith rather than sight, they know best the sweetness, the suitableness, the power, of that permission to "cast *all* their care on God:" and "in *every* thing to let their requests be made known to Him by prayer and thanksgiving." To unite this hallowed freedom of petition, this mention of every thing that to *us* seems desirable for our children—with the submission that says, "Nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done"—this, surely, must be the perfection of privilege for a child of God on earth; and while it is at the throne of grace that we most deeply feel how very far we come short of such perfection; is it not also true, that by much and earnest prayer we may hope to be brought somewhat nearer in resemblance to our great Pattern, to possess somewhat more of the "Spirit of adoption," "the glorious liberty of the household of faith?" Perplexity, or care, or even fear, far from becoming sinful or prejudicial, may prove a real blessing, if it drive and keep us close to the word of God and prayer; for it is by these that we obtain knowledge of the Divine character, His love, His faithfulness, His

power. In this way we acquire that knowledge which humbles pride, disarms unbelieving self-will, and so strengthens our confidence, that at length, it is sufficient answer to every doubt and difficulty. "*Your Father knoweth* that ye have need of these things."

XXXIX.

DIFFICULTIES AND DISCOURAGEMENTS IN THE RELIGIOUS TRAINING OF THE YOUNG, AND THE WAY TO MEET THEM.

One of the most effectual ways to strengthen mothers for their work, is, frequent reference to the promises of Christ to the young. His interest in them is every where apparent.

Another ground of hope, is, the expectation founded on the Divine declaration, that in the latter day the young shall know the Lord—"They shall all know me, from *the least* to the greatest." The religion of our blessed Saviour is the only thing that can save our children. All the learning they acquire, and the nicest training we can give, will fall short of the mark; but let Christ be formed in their hearts the hope

of glory, and all will be well. How are we to instruct them so as to lead to this important end? A great deal of assistance may be gained by looking back to our own experience. We shall find that the example of our parents did much to form *our* characters; and that ours, again, will act on our children. They are intelligent and quick observers, and if they see that our hearts are of the world, carried away with its fashions and pursuits, they will very naturally follow in this track; but if they see plainly that we are "seeking a better country" and delighting ourselves in God, they will feel attracted heavenwards, and be prepared for the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. There is a dignity of character belonging to the real Christian, which is felt even when it is not understood.

A vigilant domestic government should be maintained, in order to prepare our children to yield themselves more submissively to the government of God. In revivals of religion it has been found that children who have been accustomed to obey their parents, have usually been the first to come under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Little children should have their minds stored with Scripture. The commendation bestowed on Timothy deserves to be well considered by

parents—"*And that from a child* thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." This indicates that great pains had been taken with him by his mother and grandmother. 2 Tim. iii. 15. That which is learnt early is best remembered.

It is desirable to converse freely with experienced Christian parents and teachers on their methods of training, especially if they have been successful.

XL.

THE VARIOUS FACULTIES OF THE MIND, AND THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY SHOULD BE CULTIVATED.

Nature and Reason concur in shewing us that as they are developed so they should be cultivated.

We have first Perception; very feeble in its earliest manifestations, but increasing in power from day to day. Infants must be allowed the free use of their senses, and be furnished with the best means for promoting their employment.

We have in the next place, Attention, or the ability to fix the thoughts on one object. This may at times become painful if enforced, but when naturally exercised it is well to leave the little mind undisturbed till it is satisfied. By degrees we have memory, imitation, abstraction, imagination, judgment; all requiring special study and harmonious cultivation. Care should be taken to elicit those faculties in which the individual appears to be most deficient, and to make all the intellectual training to tell as much as possible on the education of the conscience and the moral feelings. Miss Hamilton, in her work on education, has some valuable instructions on the cultivation of the intellectual powers, and of late years considerable help has been afforded by the adoption of what is best known as the *Kinder Garten* System. Little children are delighted with this method of teaching. It gives them full and varied occupation for their eyes, their ears, their hands, their feet, and their voices. It is also social and cheerful, so that they acquire much knowledge without any weariness or trial of temper, and are well prepared for more arduous studies afterwards.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM FRIENDS WHO CONDUCT MATERNAL MEETINGS.

THE LORD'S DAY AND ITS TEMPTATIONS.

It is probable that every Christian Mother has, at times, felt the difficulty of so ordering and arranging her plans as to prove to her household that the family where the fourth commandment is observed in its holiest and most comprehensive bearing, is also the happiest and most cheerful.

From the frequency with which we have heard enquiry as to the best mode of filling up the hours, it would appear that no topic we could choose for our present consideration would have greater interest for the majority of our friends, and yet, in approaching it, the doubt is felt "whether, without learning much more, we have a right to assume in any way, however unpretending, the attitude of a teacher." Our own difficulties have often been felt to be great;

occasionally, however, their removal has proved shorter and easier than might have been expected; and in addition, as years go by, we do "learn to labour, and to wait" for the result, a little more patiently than appeared possible in our youthful eagerness to rule over a model household, one in which every child should be so well "trained in the way he should go," that even *while a child* he should never "depart from it."

Turning to the queries before us, we find that a dear young friend puts the question, "How to command the attention and quietude of little children during public worship?" To this we might give a very brief and apparently discouraging reply—"You cannot command it; the thing is unnatural and impracticable for young children." But without being quite so abrupt as this, we may ask the mother if she would find it practicable to obtain quietude and attention at any other time during the week, for a couple of hours together; and unless she can manage *this* point, it is not easy to understand how to overcome the difficulty in a place of worship. That there is a great difference in the behaviour of children there, we readily grant; one, perhaps, is partially asleep the whole time; another, who keeps awake, *is sufficiently* over-awed or entertained, as the

case may be, by the numbers around, as to remain quite still; while a third, after trying every position and occupation within reach, ends by being intolerably restless and a disturbance to all around. In the latter case it is perhaps best afterwards to tell the child, pleasantly but firmly, that as you find she cannot keep still, you will leave her at home till she is old enough to do so. Do not make a great offence of it as regards children so young as not to be able to understand any part of the service, but try to accomplish the end by other means. You may say, "When Mary can keep quite still at family worship, and listen to the chapters we read at home, then we will try her again at public worship. Would she not like to go with Papa and Mamma, and try to behave as they do?" Thus by holding it up as a reward for good conduct at home, she may be made ambitious of the honour of accompanying her parents.

Then, for those children who are already regular attendants, and who, though not ill-behaved on the whole, yet are at times fidgetty and disturbing, we must plead for a lenient judgment. Let us remember that their failings, though open to view, are not perhaps so grave as our own. Mamma, perhaps may be as much in fault as they, though her varying and

wandering thoughts are concealed under outward propriety of demeanour. If the child has thought of his toys, how often has her attention been caught by a pretty coat or bonnet not far off, and she has inwardly planned that such shall be her own child's costume the following season; or the visits or engagements of next week have come crowding in upon her mind, and so occupied it that she has known little more than her children of the nature of the preacher's argument or appeal.

However, we do not intend for a moment to intimate that a child's restlessness and inattention are not evils to be striven against, we only urge the mother not to be unduly discouraged by them. When a child can spell out a few words, always give him a book, with the proper hymns and chapters found, and help him to trace the most familiar words with his finger, especially where he has heard the narrative or hymn before. Express your pleasure if, after returning home, he can tell you anything that has been read or preached about; you may, perhaps, by a gentle whisper during the service, direct his attention to what is going on. "Now we are going to read about David, or about the Baby in the bulrushes; or the minister is going to tell us

about the Lord Jesus being crucified." Of course, this should only be done occasionally, and so guardedly, as not to induce a reply on the child's part. Then, if your child has behaved well, encourage him by your look of approbation at the end of the service, and tell him how pleased you and his Papa are when he is quiet and attentive. Do not repress his springing walk and infantine delight at being out in the fresh air again, but in this, *as in every thing else,* prove that you can sympathise with him; only gently checking him if his buoyant spirits become a little too exuberant.

Then at home, let your first endeavour be to make your children happy. With little ones, who are beyond infancy, and who yet cannot read so as to occupy themselves, you must allow some liberty, and a few amusements of a quiet kind. I remember keeping a large blacklead pencil and a little paper book for each of my children, with their names written on; these were carefully locked up during the week, and kept till the following Sunday afternoon, when they were given to the three elder children to amuse themselves quietly, while mamma put the baby to sleep, and then rested herself for twenty minutes or half-an-

hour, before beginning to read aloud or talk to them. Even when Papa or the servant could relieve me for a short time, the task was rendered much easier to them by the occupation and pleasure furnished by these pencils and paper books. The children would try to imitate the printed words of a hymn or chapter; but all the pleasure depended on the limitation of this resource to that particular time. Had the pencils and paper been about all the week, of course they would have had little charm on Sunday. Reading aloud and shewing pictures will occupy part of the day, but on this I need not enlarge.

The main idea I would endeavour to make prominent, is, that it should be *a happy day!* If parents themselves look happy and cheerful, their children will catch a like feeling; and if at times their young spirits become too boisterous, it is better not harshly to exclaim, "Do remember what day it is;" but to calm them by a pleasant smile and call, "Come to me, my dear, and tell me what Mamma read about to-day or last week; do you remember any thing of it?" With a little help, even a young child will recal that Cain and Abel, or the Baby in the manger, was the topic, and will be pleased to go over the

tale again, and then to beg for another. Occasionally, Papa may ask a few questions, or tell an interesting story, to be recalled long, long years after, when the grave has closed over his honored form; and in this way, materially help to enliven the hours. But the main work will still rest with the mother. Even where a father is truly devoted, his time is generally so much claimed by the Sunday school or other religious duties, that he cannot do much at home; happy he, whose wife will fill his place as well as her own! Let us, as far as practicable, set our children an example of constant and early attendance at the House of God, and the habit will probably remain with them through life. Let them perceive that slight indisposition or inconvenience will not keep us away; that all our arrangements are made with a view to enabling us and the servants to be there, at least part of the day; such cooking as can be, having been prepared either the day before, or with least trouble on that morning; and, sometimes, by a little contrivance, the children can have a treat even as to food, without giving any more trouble.

For elder children, Scripture exercises and questions may be easily found. "Kenneth

Forbes; or Fourteen Ways of Studying the Bible," is a delightful book, but it should be read aloud with the young people, in order fully to make them appreciate it.

A Biblical Atlas, for following the geography of the Holy Writings, and Dr. Kitto's "Tabernacle in the Wilderness," add materially to the interest of the family reading; but even with these valuable helps, there will still be intervals to be filled up. Nothing answers this purpose more delightfully than singing hymns, if the family taste for music be sufficiently developed to make it a pleasure to all. In some cases, entertainment of another kind may be provided. In our own experience we have found nothing more attractive than the exercise we denominate "Mental Pictures," that is, a Scripture incident dressed up in different language and presented to the consideration of the young people. Take an example. A Mother calls her elder children round her, and says, "Come, bring your Bibles, and hear me describe an event that we read of in the Scriptures. You will have no difficulty in finding out the chief incident, but I should like you to apprehend the minutiæ as well. Listen while I read, and try to picture the events to yourselves."

"Imagine a barren and rocky shore, bordering,

upon a small bay. The day is dark and gloomy; and the retreating tide howls like a ravenous monster bereft of its prey. At a little distance are collecting together straggling groups and individuals, apparently of many different nations. There are the polished Greek, the imperious Roman, the keen-eyed Jew, and the uncultivated but kindly inhabitants of the country. The attention of them all is suddenly called to the imminent danger of one individual, a man of an earnest and elevated mien, that makes him conspicuous among men of far more imposing presence. At sight of his peril a loud exclamation of dismay arises from all but himself. No shudder agitates his slight figure, or paleness overspreads his fearless countenance. Serene and undaunted, he overcomes the threatened danger, while astonishment fixes the gaze of all around."

"Oh, Mamma," exclaimed one young auditor, "we all know what that is; it is the shipwreck of the Apostle Paul, but you have altered the circumstances very much."

"Altered the *words* very much, you mean, Harry; I believe the event took place very much as I have pictured it. Open your Bibles and look. I will read it over again, and you may stop me at any point which you cannot verify."

"Why do you say a rocky shore, Mamma?"

"Because we read that two currents met, which would not have taken place on a smooth coast; and if St. Paul's Bay, Malta, be really the place, it is formidably rocky and bleak."

"How do we know that there were the polished Greek, the imperious Roman, and so on?"

"Look again, my boy, and you will find both mentioned among the passengers, though I have supplied the characteristics of each nation."

Another question follows, as to the personal appearance of the Apostle Paul; which is answered partly from Scripture and partly from the general tradition, and Mamma is about to turn to another picture, when Harry exclaims, "Oh, Mamma, you say the retreating *tide*; now I thought there were no tides in the Mediterranean!"

"Quite correct, Harry, and it was an unguarded expression; though I did not mean exactly the periodical ebb of the tide, but rather the retreating of the whole body of water, which takes place after a storm."

Another sketch, from a different part of the Bible is now presented.

"An invalid's chamber, in which reclines a veteran warrior, in whose countenance native

majesty contends with fast-approaching imbecility. A beautiful maiden is in waiting. The door opens, and a dignified woman, who though past the prime of life, wears unmistakable indications of former loveliness, enters the apartment, and respectfully salutes its illustrious occupant, who, arousing at her entrance, desires to hear her wishes. She proceeds to unfold a tale of heavy grievance; and before concluding, has her cause reinforced by the entrance and added pleadings of an aged man, whose eye, brighter by far than that of the monarch before him, seems to flash its falcon glances forward into futurity."

"Well, I am sure I don't know what that is; I do not remember anything in the Bible at all like it," exclaimed one of the party; but another, who has caught the clue, is busily turning over the Book of Kings, and speedily proclaims the subject. "It is Bathsheba, going in to King David's chamber, to plead against Adonijah. Oh, it is all here; but, Mamma, why do you say the king was growing imbecile, it does not tell us *that?*"

"But if you look again, Letitia, you will observe that he appears to have relinquished all public life; and there is this remarkable expression, 'Bathsheba went in unto the king, and

the king was very old.' Now, this can hardly refer to his actual age, for he had barely completed his threescore years and ten; it must, I think, mean that he was infirm, both in body and mind. It is not very likely that Nathan was much younger than the king, but how vigorous his understanding and all his powers appear, and you know, as a prophet, he did look forward into futurity."

But a Mother cannot always be prepared with entertainments of this kind, and then in case of books and hymns failing to fill up the entire intervals, she may resort to an impromptu exercise. A young party were gathered together in a drawing room of their lodgings, on the coast; the usual course of family reading, repeating and singing favourite hymns, had been gone through, and the young ones each took up a book for the rest of the time before tea. But it was evident that a little languor was creeping over them; the books were one after another laid down, the chairs drawn to the window, and a conversation begun, with which the Mother might not have thought of interfering, if it had not soon been evident that from common-place it was rapidly becoming frivolous and undesirable. A little perplexed how to effect a diversion, a remark just then made on the white

breakers below the cliff, suggested the following plan:—"Have you any idea how often the ocean is mentioned in the Bible, dear boys?"

"Not very often," replied one. "There was so little known of navigation in those days."

"Oh, dear," said another, "I think it is very often mentioned indeed."

"Well, now, let us find out which opinion is correct. Take your Bibles, and begin at the beginning; and as you turn over the leaves, you will soon find out."

The idea of this new entertainment was caught up with avidity, and the leaves were rapidly turned over; the creation and gathering together of the seas, the breaking up of the great depths of the flood, the miraculous dividing of the Red Sea, with the few other references to the ocean contained in the historical books of the Old Testament, were soon found; and the young people then opened upon the sublime imagery of the Book of Psalms, and there found almost an equal proportion of metaphorical and literal description of the floods.

The Mother remarked, "I wish you to observe how often the ocean stands here as the type of the contention, confusion, and trouble of earth, over which the power of God still rides triumphant. Now I imagine that Frederick's remark

about the little knowledge of navigation in ancient times, furnishes the explanation of this. If modern Navigators, with all their advantages, still speak of a storm at sea as being the most appalling image of the power of God contrasted with the impotence of man, what must it have appeared to those who, accustomed to creep cautiously along the shore, found themselves, by the fury of the waves, driven far beyond their knowledge, with no compass to guide them, no quadrant to ascertain their position? Do you not think that to them the assurance, 'The Lord on high is mightier than many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea," would come with peculiar comfort, (and that the 'confidence of those who were *then* afar off upon the sea,' did indeed need an Almighty foundation?) Now go on."

The prophetical books are now turned over, and then the various perils of our Lord or of His Apostles, on the inland seas and on the Mediterranean, are mentioned, with the references to them in the Epistles. "And now find the very last place where the sea is mentioned. In the twenty-first chapter of Revelation we find it stated in the description of "the new heaven and new earth," that "there shall be no more sea."

"Is that literal or metaphorical?" enquired an elder boy.

"Probably metaphorical; and we may imagine why this image is employed in describing heaven, from what we have noticed before, about the ocean so often typifying turmoil and confusion, none of which can be found above. But I think there is another reason, too; do you not imagine that it refers to those separations of dear friends across the mighty waters, which so often here fill our hearts with grief? 'No more sea!' ah, dear children, it is indeed a fitter emblem than *you* can yet realize, of the unruffled calm and eternal reunion of heaven. But now our time is up."

An exclamation of wonder arose that the afternoon was so far advanced. White waves had dashed against the shore, pleasure boats had put out and come in, the gay promenaders had gone to and fro all unnoticed, and those dear young people, with countenances bright as the day, uttered one heartfelt—"What a delightful afternoon we have had!"

Still, do what we will, discouragements will at times arise, and in reference to them we may adopt the words lately heard from our own pulpit:—"I have done all I can; have tried and prayed, and yet I cannot accomplish my object

of making the day altogether delightful and profitable!" "No, *you* cannot do it, but if you go on by faith and prayer, there is Another who will do it for you, even the Almighty, whose power never faileth."

On the Study of the Scriptures in a Class or a Family.

Abbott's "Young Christian" contains some admirable suggestions and specimens, adapted for the help of *beginners* in Biblical study; such as passages transcribed in the young writer's own words—attempts to *write* a *picture* of a whole scene, descriptive and imaginative; with such allusions, historical, geographical, &c., as may be available.

The arrangement of the Scriptures, according to the different authors, should of course be observed. But, in family reading, it is needful to point out that some of the books were *contemporaneous* in their origin, and are most interesting when read, as it were, together. Take, for example, the historical and prophetical, beginning after the book of Joshua; more especially after the times of Samuel, Elijah, and

Elisha. These three, of course, are inimitably blended and exhibited along with the history of their times. And even in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, we get glimpses of minor Prophets or Seers, who, doubtless, did and said more than is recorded of them, in the way of influence, example, and instruction. Such of the Psalms, also, as can with probability be assigned to the various events in David's history, would both give and receive additional meaning by being so connected in the reading. But of those larger and more illustrious prophetic teachings that are given in separate treatises, considerable portions are distinctly assigned to particular reigns. Uzziah's is the earliest so distinguished.

Uzziah was acquainted with the prophecies of { Isaiah. Hosea. Amos.

Jotham, with those of ..... { Isaiah. Hosea. Micah.

Ahaz, with those of ..... { Isaiah. Hosea.

Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah with those of ..... { Jeremiah. Zephaniah.

One king of Israel.

Jeroboam, the son of Joash, with those of ... { Hosea. Amos.

He probably heard too of predictions uttered by

others, who spoke of Samaria as well as of Judah.

The chief difficulty in reading the proper portions together, arises from some of the prophecies being deficient in dates, by which to mark the beginning of each reign. Perhaps it is best to make a selection for each reign, so as not to digress too long from the thread of the history. The first six chapters of Isaiah are clearly defined, the part belonging to Hezekiah's reign is almost verbatim as given in the 2nd Book of Kings.

Jeremiah's dates also are obvious, and his writings are specially interesting, because he lived to see and share in the sufferings which he predicted; probably his Lamentations were written during the long siege under Zedekiah. Though Jeremiah suffered severely for his faithfulness from his immediate hearers, his care in committing his inspirations to writing, (Jer. xxx.) was amply rewarded by some who carried the MS. to Babylon, where it must have shed a ray of comfort, even under the willow trees where the silent harps were hung, (Psalm cxxxvii.) and where at length, when the seventy years were near their close, (Jer. xxv. 12), it stirred up Daniel to those fastings and prayers that procured him such remarkable comfort and infor-

mation. Daniel's captivity belongs of course to the reign of Jehoiakim.

Some more able commentator can probably explain from what epoch Ezekiel's first date is reckoned; but as all the dates subsequent are reckoned by Jehoiachim's captivity, Ezekiel most likely went to Babylon with him, and perhaps in charge of some of those sacred vessels (2 Kings xxiv. 13) which Belshazzar so profaned (Dan. v.) From Daniel's extreme youth when he went, and from Ezekiel being described as a priest, which he could not have been under thirty years of age; he probably was the older man of the two, though not so early made a captive. Yet before he had been seven years in exile, he bears wonderful testimony to the holiness and wisdom already attained by Daniel (Ezek. xiv., xxviii.)

Haggai and Zachariah belong to the historical period of Ezra and Nehemiah. Daniel was alive when the first-named returned to Judea under the patronage of Cyrus, and bearing back the sacred vessels. Though we cannot easily fix the corresponding dates in Ezekiel's case, yet he (in vision) saw not merely the *building* of the new temple, but the symbols of Jehovah's spiritual presence in it, and the glories described stretching far beyond the limits of a single nation.

Passing to the New Testament, it is important to observe and mark the relation between the Acts and the Epistles. To a mind not trained to habits of attention, it is puzzling to read all the particulars of Paul's journey to Rome, and his residence there, and then, immediately to find in the Epistle to the Romans, his ardent longings to visit them, his past hindrances, and his hope, only reaching so far as that "*whensoever* he could get to Spain, he might be refreshed," and somewhat filled with the company of Roman Christians by the way. The prayers he solicited were not answered as he expected; he was *not* "delivered from them which did not believe, in Judea;" yet they became the very instruments of his getting to Rome, not for a brief visit, but for most blessed experiences, and most important results. This is abundantly proved by seven other of his Epistles written during his residence there as a prisoner, especially in the last—the Second Epistle to Timothy—"a heroic epistle," as it has been called. One of the seven referred to is that to Philemon—conveyed by the same messenger as that to the Colossians.

The two Epistles to the Thessalonians were probably of earlier date, being written at Athens, than those to the Corinthians, for these are said to have been from Philippi; it was probably

during the visit mentioned Acts xxi., for when he was at Philippi the first time he had not yet been to Corinth. But in whatever order they are read, it is well always to preface the reading by revising in the Acts all that can be learned of his first entrance and preaching at such places as he *had* visited, and of individuals specially mentioned.

In the case of family worship, the passages to be read in connection should be arranged beforehand, so as to prevent any uncertainty or awkward pauses at the time; but by degrees the children might be trained to make this arrangement for each occasion; and if there be a family Bible class, each, according to his attainments, might take the various departments—geographical, historical, &c., &c.

An admirable specimen of what may be called the gleaning or *tracing* plan of study is given in two papers by the Rev. W. H. Plumptree, in "Good Words." They are entitled "Revolt of Absalom;" collating and making out a continuous thread, from genealogical and other incidental fragments.

Another connection most desirable to be brought out, is that between the Old Testament and the New, and one way of doing so might be to connect the story of Cain and Abel, with

what John says of them in one of his Epistles; (1 John iii. 12), Enoch, Noah, &c., &c., with various passages in the New Testament, more especially at the present time; we should note what our Lord Himself says of them, of Moses, Jonah, &c.

Or, taking as a basis the conversation on the road to Emmaus, let us try to suppose and bring together all that Christ found in "Moses and the prophets" to expound to the two disciples concerning Himself. Philip's discourse with the eunuch, too, would afford a similar basis. Philip began only at Isaiah liii., and the eunuch himself gives a good suggestion when he says, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" *To* whom, *by* whom, on what occasion were these things done or spoken? are questions that would greatly increase the interest of familiar passages; while some such inquiries are of course essential to the right appreciation of any document whatever.

When time will admit, it has been recommended occasionally, to read an Apostolic letter as we should that of a friend, from beginning to end at one sitting.

Another suggestion may be made as to marking in a Bible the portions important and beautiful, to be read from the law of

Moses; with those parts describing the High Priest and his services; and then to connect with these the reading of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In reading the New Testament, some one should be always prepared to turn to and read the principal passages quoted from the Old.

"Kenneth Forbes; or, Fourteen Ways of Studying the Bible," is a volume most valuable for domestic guidance.

FAMILY CONCORD.

There are few things more trying and disappointing to the heart of an anxious Mother, than to witness a want of patient kindness amongst her children, and not many things are so difficult to correct. At times, a loving representation apart to each child will do great good; at others, it may seem to fail, and yet, it should not be given up. We should take every opportunity, when the heart appears more tender than usual and the conduct more pleasant, of impressing upon the children how much happier they have been than when they have been rude or unkind to each other; and urge them to try

and continue in the better course, always rewarding them by our approbation. But if we have tried this again and again, and yet failed, then other measures *must* be resorted to.

A Mother who had been much grieved by the tone her children adopted to each other, more especially at meal-times, tried the following plan: calling the chief offenders together, she said, "You know how often I have reproved you for contradicting and speaking so unkindly at table; I must now make a rule, that you do not speak at all at meals except to Papa or me. If you break this rule, you must go to bed an hour earlier that night. At the end of the week, I may, perhaps, take off the prohibition and try you again. You must remember the bad example you set to the little ones; and, also, that we do not come together at meals only to take food, but to have a happy family meeting." Much care will be required to keep children employed either with books or toys, so as to have little time for quarrelling; and they should often be reminded to think of each other's pleasures, and not of their own chiefly.

Sometimes the mother may break in and prevent a disagreement by saying something like this—"I have found a story to read to you, and while I am reading you can sit round and see

how large a bundle of paper matches you can make for me out of these letters;" or something of this kind. A little manual employment has often a very quieting effect, and prevents much contention. There are occasions, however, in which separation is the only effectual remedy. Children of the same age, and constantly together, WILL come into collision. I knew one very eminent Minister who sent his four boys to different schools, and certainly four men more closely united in affection than they are now, could nowhere be found. If, however, children are in the main kind and affectionate to each other, this experiment need not be resorted to; but if there is anything like habitual alienation, it would, I believe, be a desirable plan.

SOCIAL PRAYER.

The following plan was suggested by a clergyman's wife, and has been acted upon with much encouragement by herself and four or five married sisters. She trusted it might promote their own advancement in piety, by giving them

a deeper realization of their parental responsibility, and tend, by the Divine blessing, to the salvation of their children.

PLAN.

1st.—We agree to meet at the throne of grace in spirit every Saturday evening, also on every birthday.

2nd.—To acquaint each other with every thing in our circumstances that we wish to be made a subject of special supplication. Such as sickness, anxiety, &c.

3rd.—To seek to interest our children in our meeting for prayer, drawing them into union with us; making a point of announcing all the birthdays, and praying with them especially on their own birthday.

4th.—To note in small blank books, distributed at the formation of this union, every request received for special prayer, and subsequently the results of our united supplication.

5th.—To memorialize the birthdays of our dear departed ones, by fervent thanksgiving that they are folded in the Saviour's bosom.

6th.—To study carefully and adopt earnestly the principles of the book, "Mothers in Council," exchanged amongst us, as a token of our mutual love, at the commencement of our prayer union.

Evening Parties.

The question has been asked, whether our social parties are so conducted as to advance the spiritual interests of our families, and whether any improvements can be suggested in relation to them. A judicious friend, who has had considerable experience, has supplied us with some excellent remarks bearing on this topic, and others connected with it. She laments, as many others cannot but do, that there is less and less distinction between the *church* and the *world*—that our evening parties, amongst the young especially, are often calculated to cherish a taste for admiration and display, involving needless preparation and expence, and frequently prolonged to unseasonable hours.

It may be fairly asked, whether no remedy can be found; and if not, whether we are justified, for a little temporal gratification, to venture on what, to say the least, must be to many a *doubtful* course. In former times we well remember delightful entertainments of a

scientific character — when experiments were made, or recent discoveries explained—when the treasures of nature and art were exhibited, and suitable efforts made to render the visit *profitable* as well as *agreeable.* There is no doubt but in some circles this kind of recreation is still preferred and employed; but we heartily wish it were more in request, and that those who lead the *ton,* and have it in their power, would adopt and recommend it.

It is perfectly true, as our friend remarks, that there are some Mothers who are so circumstanced that they cannot do the things that they would. They may be involved by marriage, by long acquaintance, or even by pecuniary interests in connections, which render it exceedingly difficult for them to pursue that course with their household which to others is comparatively easy.

Such Mothers have a strong claim on the sympathy of those who are more favoured; at the same time their case presents a lesson that should not be disregarded by those whose connections are not yet formed, and to some also in the earlier stages of married life. "A bride of youth" has peculiar influence over her husband, and in defining their circle of visitation, no false

delicacy should prevent their looking onward to the time when the interests of children will be involved by the friendship of the parents.

But even with those who have uniformly sought to "walk in wisdom towards them that are without," the subject before us is not without interest, for Christian nurture is not always alike successful; and the time will come when children, however tractable, begin to think and act for themselves.

Experience, we think, will bear out the assertion, that at no period will a Christian Mother more deeply feel the need of heavenly wisdom, than at that which is noiselessly and gradually changing childhood into youth and manhood. So thought and felt an experienced matron, who was giving wise and kindly counsel to a very youthful Mother, with her firstborn nestling in her arms. Good and excellent the counsels were, as to enforcing unqualified submission in early childhood; but, added the senior lady, "Your *boy*, if spared, will become *a young man*, and will have to mingle in society. He may not see every thing in the same light as you do, but use every effort to retain his confidence. Let him see that you are interested in what interests him. When, in the

full flow of pleasureable excitement, he tells you of his companions or amusements, do not be hasty to frown or condemn, but treat him carefully and lovingly that he may not shrink from confiding in you again. At the same time, after prayerful consideration, you must choose your opportunity to caution him; and when he can listen with coolness, tell him faithfully where you see dangers he did not suspect, or positive evil under some fair disguise."

Nature, herself, teaches us that complete recreation—simple amusement is sometimes necessary; therefore, it must be *innocently* practicable. Light hearts and buoyant spirits are precious gifts of God, and there must be harmless channels in which they can be permitted, at proper seasons, to flow freely. It is not mirth itself, but "The *mirth* of *fools*," that the Scriptures condemn; and most unadvisable would it be for our children to get the impression, that natural simple merriment is to be found only amidst worldly, or, at best, in doubtfully Christian company.

At the same time we must most carefully consider the *tendency* of every amusement which we sanction. Our subtle adversary is ever on the watch to blind or mislead us. He beckons

us from "the fountain of living waters" to "the broken cisterns," and takes a special interest in beguiling the offspring of *religious* parents. Earnestly should they watch, and fervently should they pray for wisdom and grace to withstand his devices, and to be enabled in these latter days, like Abraham of old, to "walk before their house with a *perfect* heart."

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

SUITABLE FOR

MATERNAL READING AND MEDITATION.

Genesis—parts of the following chapters—3, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 32, 33, 37, 42, 44, 45, 48, 50.
Exodus 2.
Judges 13.
1 Samuel 1, 2, 3, 4.
2 Samuel 12.
2 Kings 4.
Job 1.
Proverbs 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 23, 31.
Matthew 2, 15, 19.
Mark 5, 9, 10, 11.
Luke 2, 8, 10, 15.
John 9, 11.
Ephesians 5, 6.
Colossians 3.
1 Timothy 2.
2 Timothy 1.

LIST OF BOOKS ADAPTED TO PARENTS.

Mrs. Hannah More's Strictures
Miss Hamilton on Education
Miss Edgeworth's Practical Education
Appleton on Education
Babbington's Practical View
Fenelon on the Education of Daughters
Hints for Nursery Discipline, &c.
Hints to Parents in the Spirit of Pestalozzi
Mrs. Bakewell on the Early Management of Children
Mrs. Spurr on Education
Home Education
Hale on Education
Woman's Mission
Cottage Homes and Mother's Trials
Fry's Principles of Education
Locke on Education
Progressive Education
Dwight's Father's Book
Mott's Observations on the Importance of Female Education
Carpenter on Education
The Good Mother
Spring's Principles of Education
Phelp's Female Student
Mrs. Sandford's Female Improvement
Household Education. Miss Martineau
Intellectual Culture. Abercrombie

Haigh's Practical Treatise on Day Schools
Wilderspin on Infant Schools
Bilby and Ridgway's Infant Teacher's Assistant
Aids to Development
Serle's Christian Parent
How do you Manage the Young Ones?
Hill's "Is it Well?"
Clark on the Management of Infants
Reciprocal Duties of Parents and Children
Guide to Domestic Happiness
Henry's Address to Parents
Gift to Mothers
Mother at Home
Way to do Good
Mann's Physiology
The Health of Mothers
How to Manage a Baby
Bull's Maternal Management
Mrs. Barwell's Nursery Discipline
Wood's Edinburgh Sessional School
Stowe's Infant and Training System
Mother's Magazine
Parent's Assistant. C. Fry
Dunn's Normal School Manual
Anderson's Domestic Constitution
Pike's Parental Care
Mayo on Infant Education
Memoirs of Mrs. Huntington
Memoir of Mrs. Graham
Memoir of Mrs. Winslow
A Word to Parents, Nurses, and Teachers, on the Rearing and Management of Children. By Esther Copley
Motherless Family. By ditto
Early Piety. By Abbot.
Mother's Friend
Sunday at Home
Mothers in Council
Bright Light in Early Dawn
The Christian Mother; or Notes for Mothers' Meetings. Mrs. E. Hoare
Thorn's Children's Bible Lessons
Family Prayers, in the Simplest Language

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN.

ARTS, SCIENCES, ETC.

Book of Trades
Insect Architecture
Vegetable World Displayed
Our World; its Rocks and Fossils
Natural History of Birds
Joyce's Scientific Dialogues
Celestial Scenery
Caterpillars, Butterflies, and Moths; their Manners, Habits, and Transformations
Cassell's Works on Education
Gosse's Natural Science
My Country. By E. S. A.
Little English Flora
Six Days of Creation. By Rhind
Historical Tales of Illustrious British Children.
Key to Knowledge, by a Mother
Brewer's Keligion in Science
Love a Reality, not a Romance
Lessons on Objects
Lessons on Shells
Stories of England and Her Forty Counties
The Philosophy of the Five Senses
Little Philosopher
Plants of the Land and Water
Continuation of Harry and Lucy
Evenings at Home
The Observing Eye
Howitt's Seasons
Belzoni's Travels
The Old Testament Sacrifices Explained
Juvenile Library—
Mine
Ship
Forest, &c., &c., &c.
Peter Parley's Tales
What is a Bird?
History and Biography
Hack's Grecian Stories
Stories of Ireland and its Four Provinces
Slater's Chronology
England and its People
Things of Every-Day Use: What they Are, Where they Come From, and How they are Made
Historical Miscellany
Brewer's History of France
The French Story
Children of Summerbrook
The British Story

Modern British Plutarch
Mrs. Markham's Histories
Dr. Mann's Astronomical Science
Naomi; or the Siege of Jerusalem
Keith on Prophecy
Stories of Scotland and its Adjacent Islands
Journeys of the Children of Israel
Manners and Customs of the Jews
True Stories from Ancient History
" Modern History
" English History
The Illustrated Geology; or Former Worlds, their Structure, Condition, and Inhabitants. F. C. Bakewell
Dicken's History of England
Near Home
Dear Old England
Far Off
Tales of a Grandfather
Montgomery's Poems
Wordsworth's Poems
Mrs. Barrett Browning's Poems
A. Proctor's Poems
Tennyson's Poems
Southey's Poems
Sigourney's Poems
Cowper's Poems
Pollok's Poems
Edmeston's Poems
Howitt's Poems
Goldsmith's Poems
Hemans' Poems
Try and Try Again. By Old Jonathan
Winslow
Tossed on the Waves.
Old Humphrey's Writings
The Junior Clerk
Charlesworth's Letters to Children
Lawrence's Bible Stories
Consideration for Others
Brewer's Guide to Science

RELIGIOUS.

Sermons to Children. By a Lady
" Burder
" Doddridge
" Fletcher
" Todd
Henry and His Bearer
Memoir of Rolls Plumbe
Memoir of D. and A. Brown
Barbauld's Hymns in Prose
Thornton's Early Piety
Explanation of the Parables
Way for a Child to be Saved
Mamma's Bible Stories
Draper's Bible Stories
Every-day Duty
Memoir of Miss M. J. Graham
Companion to the Bible
Champney's (Rev. W. W.) Tender Grass for Christ's Lambs
Prayers for Little Children
Edmeston's (James) Infant Breathings
Forty-eight Missionary Stories for Children
Memoir of J. W. Rogers; the Folded Lamb. By his Mother.
Little Blanche
Green's Addresses to Children
Ministering Children
Cobbin's Child's Commentary
Pictorial Bible. Kitto
Barnes' Notes on the Gospels
Abbot's Young Christian
Pike's Persuasives
Guide to Young Disciples
Marten and his Scholars
Sherman's Acquaintance with God
Christian Father's Present
Memoir of Miss Davidson
Sprague's Letters to a Daughter
Barton's Bible Stories
Maternal Solicitude
Jewsbury's Letters
Legge's 1000 Questions on the Old Testament
Ditto on the New
Companion to the Closet. Jefferson
Plumptree's Scripture Histories
Lessons about God, for very Little Children
Mine Explored
Teacher Taught
Contributions of Q. Q.
Memoir of H. K. White
Abbot's Rollo Series
Caleb in Town
Caleb in the Country
Nelly Vanner
Todd's Truth made Simple
Night of Toil
Anna Ross
Kenneth Forbes
Woodcroft, or Elder Daughters, their Duties and Influence

MISCELLANEOUS.

Domestic Portraiture. L. Richmond
Lives of Venning and Howard

Lives of Remarkable Children
Life of Martha
Young Man from Home
Pierre and his Family
Fairchild Family
Original Tales
Harry's Holiday
The Listener
Ruth and her Friends
The Elder Brother. Mrs. Geldart
Well-spent Hour
Father Clement
Decision
True Stories
Little Mary
" Grown Older
Little Willie
Peep of Day
Line upon Line
Cobwebs
Limed Twigs
Boy's Own Book
Every Boy's Book
Brothers and Sisters. Mrs. Marshall
Harry and Lucy
Early Lessons

Letters to Young Ladies. By Mrs. Sigourney
Self Help
Lyrics for Little Ones
Emma and her Nurse
Worlds Displayed
Display
Mornings with Mamma
My Children's Diary
Shades of Character
Indian Pilgrim
Pollok's Covenanters
Uncle Philip's Conversations
The Story of Martin Luther
" Zwingle
" Calvin
Elements of Thought
Todd's Sunday School Teacher's Guide
Todd's Student's Guide
Barth's Church History
Timpson's Church History
Life of Luther
" Melancthon
" Bruce
" Washington

BOOKS FOR SERVANTS.

Ruth Clark
My Station and its Duties
The Young Servant
On the Early Management of Children. By Mrs. Hoare
Household Tracts
Faithful Servants. E. Allen
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What shall I do with my Money?
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Margery, the Martyr.
Home! Sweet Home!
Lost Days.

On Health.

The Worth of Fresh Air.
The Use of Pure Water.
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